

# Alternatives Analysis – Compilation of Public Comments

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Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan  
Planning Organization

**2/8/2012**

The DCHC MPO released for public comment the Alternatives Analysis reports for the Triangle Regional Transit Program, which contained recommendations on proposed light rail and commuter rail transit in corridors between Durham and Orange counties and Durham and Wake counties. Enclosed is the feedback from citizens, government offices and community organizations from September 15, 2011 through the end of the public comment period, January 11, 2012. Two noteworthy documents were submitted after the public comment period and are properly identified.

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(submitted after close of public comment period)

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Comments received by electronic mail and postal letters

# DRAFT

The following resolution was introduced by Alderman Slade and seconded by Alderman Broun:

A RESOLUTION RECEIVING AN UPDATE ON THE TRIANGLE REGIONAL TRANSIT  
PROGRAM AND PROVIDING COMMENTS ON THE DURHAM-ORANGE CORRIDOR  
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS  
Resolution No. 54/2011-12

WHEREAS, *Carrboro Vision 2020* (4.13) states that the “town should cooperate with Chapel Hill and other regional entities in a comprehensive transportation plan to include: regional transit service conducted by the Triangle Transit Authority, seamless connections among all the region’s public transit systems, and shorter routes and more frequent service”; and

WHEREAS, 14.1 percent of Carrboro residents take public transportation to work, according to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau; and

WHEREAS, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan recommends a light rail corridor connecting Durham with the UNC campus, with a recommended future expansion to Carrboro; and

WHEREAS, Triangle Transit is conducting an Alternatives Analysis to apply for Federal Transit Administration funding for a regional fixed guideway between Durham and UNC; and,

WHEREAS, the Alternatives Analysis has recommended light rail transit as the Locally Preferred Alternative between Durham and Orange Counties; and

WHEREAS, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC-MPO) Transportation Advisory Committee is expected to consider approval of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) at its February 2012 meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Carrboro Board of Aldermen that the Board of Aldermen receives the update on the Triangle Regional Transit Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board provides the following additional comments:

- a. The Board recommends:
  - i. That A3(d) station at UNC Hospital does not preclude future extensions to downtown Chapel Hill, Carrboro
  - ii. That the University Square Redevelopment may impact one possible alignment
  - iii. The TAC consider inclusion of any rail extensions in Orange County in 2040 LRTP
  - iv. The TAC conduct corridor or feasibility study examining rail alternatives to connect Carrboro with the first phase of rail after the LPA is adopted in 2012

The foregoing resolution having been submitted to a vote received the following vote and was duly adopted this 22nd day of November 2011:

Ayes: Dan Coleman, Sammy Slade Lydia Lavelle, Mark Chilton, Joal Hall Broun, Jacquelyn Gist, Randee Haven-O'Donnell

Noes: None

Absent or Excused: None

## **Presentation from Triangle Transit on Alternatives Analysis Study**

Patrick McDonough, Senior Transportation Planner, Triangle Transit, introduced this item. He stated that the Board requested to receive a presentation from Triangle Transit staff on the status of the Alternatives Analysis study. From previous presentations, Triangle Transit has undergone an extensive federal study to evaluate the various fixed-guide way options in Wake, Durham and Orange counties called the Alternatives Analysis. The analysis has provided two rail corridor options in Durham County – one commuter rail option heading east from Durham to RTP and Raleigh and a light rail option that traverses west through downtown Durham to Chapel Hill. The next step in the process is to define a specific alignment in the corridor. The chosen alignment in the corridor would be called the “Locally Preferred Alternative.” The final decision on a Locally Preferred Alternative would be made by the Durham Chapel-Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization early next year.

Mr. McDonough presented the following:

- Today’s Focus: Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for Durham-Wake & Durham-Orange Transit Corridors.
- Background on Process
- Decisions Before MPO
- Review of Recommended Alternatives
- Current Timeline for LPA Decision

Mr. McDonough replied to several questions asked by the Board.

Vice-Chairman Reckhow moved, seconded by Commissioner Karriker to suspend the rules.

The motion carried unanimously.

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Vice-Chairman Reckhow moved, seconded by Commissioner Howerton to support C1 and C2 ahead to MPO and highlight the need to study the New Hope corridor swath.

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Directive**

Make the necessary changes to the endpoint as directed by the Board.

**I, Amy T. Harvey, Acting Town Clerk of the Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, hereby certify that the attached is a true and correct copy of (2012-01-23/R-7) adopted by the Chapel Hill Town Council on January 23, 2012.**

**This the 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2012.**

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**Amy T. Harvey  
Acting Town Clerk**



**A RESOLUTION PROVIDING THE DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROPOSED TRIANGLE REGIONAL TRANSIT PROGRAM LOCAL PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (2012-01-23/R-7)**

WHEREAS, Triangle Transit has undertaken an analysis of a light rail corridor between Chapel Hill and Durham; and

WHEREAS, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization has released the draft Triangle Regional Transit Program Local Preferred Alternative for public comment; and

WHEREAS, the Chapel Hill Town Council has reviewed the draft Local Preferred Alternative and received public comment; and

WHEREAS, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Transportation Advisory Committee is expected to approve a final Local Preferred Alternative on February 8, 2012.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill that the Council recommends the Transportation Advisory Committee approve the proposed Local Preferred Alternative with the following modifications:

- Alternative alignments C1 and C2 should be further analyzed as part of the anticipated Environmental Impact Statement. The Town expresses a preference for alignment C2.
- The Environmental Impact Statement should include a more detailed assessment of the location of the Hamilton Road Station and include options for grade separating the crossing of the C2 corridor with Barbee Chapel Road as included in the NC54 Phase II Study.
- The Environmental Impact Statement should evaluate the impact of both alignments on the Little Creek floodplain and the proposed Little Creek trail.

This the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2012.





North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Office of Conservation, Planning, and Community Affairs

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Linda Pearsall, Director

Dee Freeman, Secretary

September 9, 2011

Robert G. Healy, Chair  
New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee  
839 Sedgefield Street  
Durham, NC 27705

Re: Locally Preferred Alternative Study, Light Rail Transit, New Hope Creek Corridor

Dear Mr. Healy,

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. Although we attended meetings during an earlier phase in the development of this project, we have not been informed of any recent progress, including the implementation of a Locally Preferred Alternative Study. You are correct that the selection of alternative routes across the natural area we have identified along New Hope Creek is an issue that concerns us.

In cooperation with Durham and Orange counties, the Natural Heritage Program has documented the ecological significance of the New Hope Creek Corridor in reports going back to 1987. The portion of the corridor that occurs in vicinity of the proposed project is described in both our general natural areas inventory of Durham County (Hall and Sutter 1999) and in a survey of the Corps lands surrounding the Jordan Lake project (LeGrand 1999). Sections upstream are included in our inventory of Orange County natural areas (Sather and Hall 1988; Sorrie 2004) and sections downstream in our inventory of Chatham County (Hall and Boyer 1992). These surveys document the presence of a number of exemplary natural communities and rare species of plants and animals within the New Hope floodplain. Within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project, we have recorded high quality occurrences of the Piedmont/Mountain Levee Forest and Piedmont/Mountain Bottomland Forest natural communities and the State Threatened Big Shellbark Hickory (*Carya laciniosa*). Equally important, these surveys have all noted that New Hope Creek floodplain is an integral part of a much larger system of natural areas, extending from Duke Forest in the headwater area down to the Jordan Lake Game Lands and even farther downstream along the Cape Fear all the way into the Coastal Plain.

As you note in your letter, the citizens, conservation groups, and local governments in the Durham area, along with the State, have already made major investments in protecting the continuity of this corridor. The construction by NC DOT of the new bridge at the US 15-501 crossing of New Hope Creek is one of the most noteworthy examples in the state where efforts were made to accommodate the passage of wildlife beneath the span. The ongoing acquisition of conservation preserves and easements to bridge the gap between Duke Forest and the Jordan Lake Project lands, involving the efforts of multiple parties, has also strongly contributed to maintaining the connectivity along this vast natural landscape.

We hope that these examples will be matched by the careful selection of a route for the Light Rail Transit across the New Hope Floodplain that will minimize as much as possible the disruptive impacts to its wildlife and natural

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ecosystems. We strongly prefer an alignment that adjoins the existing US 15-501 corridor, keeping the disturbance within an already highly disturbed area.

In addition to the direct impacts of the alignment across the floodplain, we have concerns about the potential for significant secondary and cumulative impacts to result from this project. In particular, we note in the Addendum to the Alternatives Analysis that a transit station (Patterson Place Station) has been proposed to be located immediately adjoining the New Hope floodplain on the western side of the LTR alignment that crosses the floodplain to the south of the existing US 15-501 corridor. We also understand that a LTR maintenance facility is being considered for the same general area. Both of these projects have the potential to contribute a significant amount of noise and traffic to this area, as well as other impacts such as water quality degradation. We believe that the selection of sites for these additional projects will be strongly linked to the selection of the preferred alignment of the LTR and should be considered – along with their potential impacts -- as part of the Locally Preferred Alternative Study.

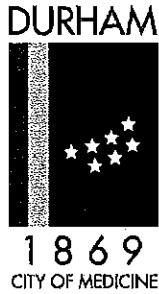
We are glad to provide information for the Alternatives study directly, and to work with the Durham City-County Planning Department, NC Department of Transportation, Triangle Transit Authority, Army Corps of Engineers, and local conservation organizations, such as your own, to try to identify an alternative that poses the least harm to the New Hope ecosystems. Please let us know if there is any other information that we can supply to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Pearsall".

Linda Pearsall, Director

Cc: Andy Henry, Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
David King, Triangle Transit Authority  
Helen Youngblood, Durham City-County Planning Department  
Sheri Bryant, NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
Francis Farrell, US Army Corps of Engineers



CITY OF DURHAM | DURHAM COUNTY  
City-County Planning Department  
101 CITY HALL PLAZA | DURHAM, NC 27701  
919.560.4137 | F 919.560.4641



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November 4, 2011

Andy Henry  
DCHC MPO  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Transportation Department  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Andy,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Durham-Orange Corridor Alternatives Analysis. The Durham City-County Planning Department looks forward to continuing collaboration with project partners to secure a transit alignment that will best serve our neighborhoods, city, county, and region.

While each of the alternatives considered in this study has merit, the full realization of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Alternative, from Alston Avenue to UNC Hospitals, best aligns with the adopted *Durham Comprehensive Plan*. This Plan anticipates, and supports through policy, high intensity residential and employment growth around transit stations at a level consistent with ridership projections of LRT technology. Transit supportive zoning regulations, rooted in the concept of form-based zoning, are currently under review by Durham's governing bodies. This suite of land use and zoning tools will enable the Durham-Orange LRT Alternative to be integrated into our neighborhoods in a way that enhances existing businesses, supports a full range of housing opportunities, and encourages real estate development.

The remainder of our comments are specific to the LRT Alternative, and are centered around these topics:

1. Station Locations
2. Alignment
3. Park and Ride Facilities
4. Operations and Maintenance Facility

### 1. Station Locations

- A South Square station on Shannon Road will afford better opportunity for future Transit Oriented Development (TOD); therefore, South Square A (Shannon) is the preferred station location.
  - Please clarify and make consistent the difference between South Square A and South Square B. Figure ES-1, which illustrates the recommended LPA, labels 'South Square B' though it appears to be the station location on Shannon Road which is referred to in other locations as South Square A.
  - The South Square stations appear to be inverted again on Figure 2-2 LRT alignment.
- The Duke Medical Center station at Fulton Street (Option A) is more centrally located for employees and patrons of both the Duke Medical and Veteran's Administration facilities. In addition, this station location is more accessible to neighborhoods north of Highway 147. Right-of-way issues and congestion are concerns; however, a center platform would provide a pedestrian safe haven for pedestrians crossing Erwin Road.

### 2. Alignment

- Consistent with the preference for a Shannon Road station location at South Square, Alignment D3 is the preferred route.
- There is concern over the impact to the New Hope Creek wetlands and the cost of environmental mitigation between Patterson Place and MLK Parkway. We are optimistic further study of this corridor in the EIS will uncover the most environmentally sound design option, however, we would like to understand what the cost, ridership, and TOD implications would be for moving the alignment closer to the 15-501 corridor.

### 3. Park and Ride Facilities

- Space for parking, stormwater retention/treatment, and bus bays would represent a significant percentage of acreage near many of the LRT stations in Durham. While park and ride facilities will be extremely important for ridership in the early years of operation, efforts should be made so that park and ride facilities do not preclude opportunities for TOD. One option might be to pace the number of parking spots slightly faster than projected ridership figures.
- Park and Ride Facilities are considered Commercial Parking in Durham's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), and are allowed in most nonresidential zoning districts, including the Downtown Design district.
- If there was a study done to estimate the amount of parking and bus bays each facility will need, we would like to see it included in this report.

#### 4. Operations and Maintenance Facility

- Significant barriers exist at each identified site for the LRT Operations and Maintenance Facility:
  - The most difficult site, in the Durham City-County Planning Department's professional opinion, is the location near Patterson Place. A facility at this location would interfere with a proposed limited access interchange for US 15-501 on the Long Range Transportation Plan. Additionally, its proximity to the proposed Patterson Place station would eliminate a TOD opportunity. A facility at this site would require a Comprehensive Plan Amendment and a Zoning Map Change, which Durham City-County Planning would not support.
  - The sites at Farrington Road and Leigh Village pose issues similar to each other. A Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Zoning Map Change would be necessary to locate the facility in the area. The facility would also lie within the Major Transportation Corridor Overlay District which is intended to buffer views of I-40. A Major Special Use Permit, and thus the approval of City Council, is necessary to build within the MTC Overlay.
  - The most preferable site of those identified is the Cornwallis site at the former Pepsi distribution plant. A facility at this location would pose less disruption to nearby residential neighborhoods. However, there may be concerns from adjacent property owners that should be addressed.
  - Durham City-County Planning requests to see an analysis of how such a facility, which would support approximately 120 jobs, could fit into the area between Hwy. 147 and the railroad tracks near the Alston Avenue station. Initial review of this potential site shows a potential for land assembly that is currently zoned to permit this type of facility.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Durham-Orange County Corridor Alternatives Analysis. If our comments raise any questions please feel free to contact us. We look forward to engaging in ongoing conversations.

Sincerely,



Steven L. Medlin, AICP  
Durham City-County Planning Director

cc: Keith Luck, AICP, Assistant Director  
Patrick Young, AICP, Assistant Director  
Aaron Cain, AICP, Planning Supervisor  
Hannah Jacobson, Planner



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
**Office of Conservation, Planning, and Community Affairs**

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Linda Pearsall, Director

Dee Freeman, Secretary

November 15, 2011

Mr. John Wilson  
305 Madera Lane  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Re: Locally Preferred Alternative Study, Light Rail Transit, Little Creek/New Hope Creek Corridor

Dear Mr. Wilson,

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. Although we were involved in earlier discussions of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system proposed in Orange and Durham counties, we were not asked to provide comments on the Locally Preferred Alternatives Study and only became aware of it recently. Yours is the first request we have received to review potential impacts to natural areas on Little Creek.

As shown in Figure 3-3a in the Detailed Definition of Alternatives Technical Report, both the Preferred Alternative C1 and Alternative C2 transect lands owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers located along Little Creek. Of particular concern to us is that this tract includes a Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA), the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes, which we evaluated in a biological survey conducted for Durham County and the Triangle Land Conservancy (Hall and Sutter 1999); this area was also evaluated in a survey conducted for the US Army Corps of Engineers (LeGrand 1999). The boundaries of the SNHA largely coincide with the Corps property and may be transected by both of the proposed alternative alignments shown in Figure 3-3a. We are particularly concerned about Alternative C1, since it crosses the SNHA along a currently undisturbed alignment and is therefore likely to have a more significant impact on wildlife than C2, which lies within the already disturbed transportation corridor along NC 54.

Although the outline of the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes SNHA is shown in Figure 3-3a, no mention is made of its presence or significance in the section on Environmental Impacts (Detailed Definition of Alternatives Technical Report, Section 3.2.6, pp. 3-25 – 3-36). In general, this section reviews only a small set of impacts and does not address the possible effects on rare species or wildlife habitat in general. The document also does not mention that this area was acquired by the US Army Corps of Engineers at least partially to mitigate losses of wildlife habitat by the impoundment of the Jordan Lake Reservoir. Also, no mention is made that this area is managed as a State Game Land by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission; nor are hunting or safety issues discussed.

The few environmental issues that are addressed by this document focus solely on the direct impacts of construction. However, we believe that the indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed project are likely to be much more significant and should be addressed. With all the environmental changes that we expect to see in the near future, protection of the unfragmented forests around Jordan Lake is becoming an ever more pressing concern. A truly

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comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts to such areas should focus on indirect and cumulative impacts as much – if not more – than on the direct impacts.

We note that Addendum 1 of this report states that “the alternatives advanced from the AA process for further study will be subject to more detailed evaluation of environmental impacts”, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). While we expect to participate in the NEPA review of this project, and may also provide comments through review of impacts to the natural area as called for under Durham’s Unified Development Ordinance, we believe that these issues should be included upfront in the scoping phase for the project as a Locally Preferred Alternative is considered. Presenting the findings of this study as is – particularly with preferred alternatives already identified – is misleading to both the public and local governments, who are being asked to endorse the findings of this document without full knowledge of the likely impacts, or of the delays that may be necessary to comply with NEPA or other environmental regulations.

We would be glad to provide information for the Alternatives study and to work with local governments in Durham and Orange counties,, NC Department of Transportation, Triangle Transit Authority, US Army Corps of Engineers, and local conservation organizations to try to identify an alternative that poses the least harm to the New Hope ecosystems. Please let us know if there is any other information that we can supply to you.

Sincerely,



Linda Pearsall

Cc: Andy Henry, Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Juanita Swink, Triangle Transit Authority  
Helen Youngblood, Durham City-County Planning Department  
David Bonk, Town of Chapel Hill Planning Department  
Bernadette Pelissier, Chair, Orange County Board of Commissioners  
Shari Bryant, NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
Francis Ferrell, US Army Corps of Engineers



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Office of Conservation, Planning, and Community Affairs

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Governor

Linda Pearsall  
Director

Dee Freeman  
Secretary

December 7, 2011

Mr. Andrew Henry  
Transportation Planner  
Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Re: Locally Preferred Alternative Study, Light Rail Transit, Little Creek and New Hope Creek Corridors

Dear Mr. Henry,

We have been asked by two different citizen groups to comment on potential impacts of the proposed Light Rail Transit (LTR) alternatives on Significant Natural Heritage Areas (SNHAs) located in the Durham County portion of the project (see attachments). As a courtesy, we are sharing the information with you that we provided to the citizen groups.

Of particular concern to our agency are potential impacts to rare species, exemplary natural communities, or Significant Natural Heritage Areas (SNHAs) located along some of the proposed alternatives. Although direct impacts of the alternative alignments on wetlands and streams were briefly mentioned in the Detailed Definition of Alternatives Technical Report (Section 3.2.6), other important environmental issues were not addressed at all. As shown in Figure 3-3a, both Alternatives C1 and C2 cross a large area of wetlands and bottomlands owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers and identified as the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes SNHA. Although the SNHA is clearly identified in this figure, no mention of it is made in the assessment of potential environmental impacts, nor is there any mention that this area is currently managed as a State Game Land by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. Similarly, Figure 3-3b indicates that the sole alternative for the LTR crossing on New Hope Creek will transect the New Hope Creek Bottomland Forest SNHA, but there is no mention of this fact or discussion of potential impacts given in the text.

Of particular relevance for the selection of Locally Preferred Alternatives, these natural areas and other SNHAs in Durham County have been formally recognized by the Durham City-County Planning Department as significant local resources. Section 8.10 of the Durham Unified Development Ordinance specifically mentions SNHAs identified by the Natural Heritage Program as "protected through a series of development standards," including site plan review. We feel that the Alternatives Study falls into that category; thus, analysis of possible impacts to the SNHAs should be addressed.

There is strong local interest in protecting these two specific SNHAs as indicated by several recent actions. Both Orange and Durham counties, as well as several local conservation organizations, have made substantial investments to conserve lands in the New Hope Creek and Little Creek corridors. Thanks largely to local citizen efforts, the State

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Department of Transportation agreed to construct a dedicated wildlife passage as part of the US 15-501 bridge replacement on New Hope Creek, serving to maintain animal movements connecting Duke Forest in the headwaters area and the Corps-owned lands downstream around Jordan Lake. On Little Creek, the Town of Chapel Hill has recently reviewed two proposed developments that would have impinged on the SNHA. In one case, a zoning request was denied; in the other, the project was substantially modified, both in response to concerns about impacts to the SNHA and to concerns about hunting and safety issues associated with the adjacent state Game Land. Clearly, protection of these natural areas has been an important local priority and they should be included in any assessment of the LTR.

Because the SNHAs and the Game Land were not discussed, we recommend that a more complete assessment be developed. We are glad to provide information to help that process. We further recommend that alternatives be considered that limit impacts to the two SNHAs by following the existing transportation corridors along NC 54, US 15-501 or even I-40. Finally, we recommend that the concerns of other interested parties be discussed in the document, including those of the US Army Corps of Engineers, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Durham City-County Planning Department, and several local conservation organizations.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,



Linda Pearsall

Cc: Juanita Swink, Triangle Transit Authority  
Melba McGee, NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Michael Ruffin, Durham County Manager  
Jane Korest, Durham County Open Space & Real Estate  
Shari Bryant, NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
Travis Wilson, NC Wildlife Resources Commission  
Francis Ferrell, US Army Corps of Engineers  
Michael Hosey, US Army Corps of Engineers  
Robert Healy, New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee  
John Wilson

December 15, 2011

CIN: 110186

Mr. Mark Ahrendsen  
Director, Durham Department of Transportation  
Chair, DCHC MPO Technical Coordinating Committee  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Subject: Public and Agency input regarding Durham-Orange Corridor AA process

Dear Mark:

As you are aware, Triangle Transit, at the request of the DCHC MPO and CAMPO, prepared Alternatives Analyses (AAs) for corridors identified in the 2035 Joint DCHC CAMPO Long Range Transportation Plans for proposed major transit investments. Through the AA process the Durham/Orange, Durham/Wake and Wake Corridors were evaluated in order to identify the most appropriate initial transit investment or Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in each corridor that would be advanced for further study. AAs are the first of many phases in the iterative federal project planning and development process, which projects that may be considered for public funding must undergo.

The purpose of the Alternatives Analysis is to identify the termini, alignment, technology and general station locations of a proposed project that would undergo detailed evaluation in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) *before* the project could be advanced into the final design phase. However, before the NEPA process may begin the applicable Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must adopt a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for each project. Unfortunately the term Locally Preferred Alternative is also used to identify the project that is defined after the completion of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We believe that this has led to a great deal of misunderstanding regarding the very general level of environmental review and analysis that was conducted in the AA process.

Adoption of the LPA is followed by the NEPA Scoping process during which open coordination with federal, state, and local agencies (regulatory and non-regulatory), elected officials, project partners, and the public is conducted to identify and define the issues to be studied in detail and documented thorough the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. This process must be followed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Triangle Transit before any final decisions are made. Only after a Record of Decision is issued by the FTA would the evaluation of potential impacts to environmental (and all other) resources be considered defined to a level that would be sufficient to make final determinations regarding the actual alignment, the location of stations, and other project elements.

During the AA process members of the public identified concerns regarding the potential impacts of alternative alignments which would cross the Little Creek and New Hope Creek Corridors. While the AA documents issued in July 2011 identified that additional study must be undertaken in order to advance a proposed project beyond the very conceptual level reflected in the AA, an addendum was issued in August 2011. The addendum was intended to clarify any misunderstanding regarding the



Mr. Mark Ahrendsen  
December 15, 2011  
Page two of three

degree to which further studies of potential impacts to environmental resources would be undertaken subsequent to the adoption of an LPA.

The recent correspondence which has been sent out by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources to members of the public and most recently to Mr. Andy Henry, has erroneously indicated that adoption of the Locally Preferred Alternative cannot take place until more extensive environmental evaluation has been undertaken. This opinion does not accurately reflect the nature of the AA, the purpose of which is to *identify a project for further study in accordance with NEPA*. The environmental significance and sensitive nature of the Little Creek and New Hope Creek corridors is unquestionable. Triangle Transit has and will continue to follow the federal process which has been established to safeguard environmental resources and to avoid or minimize and mitigate environmental impacts.

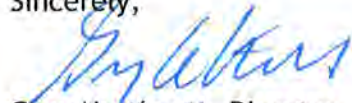
In early November 2011, we were contacted by Ms. Melba McGee, Environmental Coordinator in the Legislative and Intergovernmental section of DENR, regarding the AA process. On November 8<sup>th</sup>, as a follow-up to the telephone conversation, Ms. McGee was sent an explanation of the AA process, links to documents on the [www.ourtransitfuture.com](http://www.ourtransitfuture.com) web site, other information including the above referenced Addendum clarifying the nature of further study after adoption of the LPA and the offer of further assistance. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, after having received copies of correspondence dated Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> (related to the inadequacy of the AA) and signed by Ms. Linda Pearsall, Director of the DENR Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs, we requested a meeting with Ms. Pearsall and DENR staff, and provided specific dates within December. The response from Ms. Pearsall, which was received on December 5<sup>th</sup>, indicated that none of those dates were feasible. With the assistance of Ms. McGee, the meeting with DENR staff, Triangle Transit staff and consultants and staff from DCHC MPO will take place on January 10, 2012 - the first date on which DENR staff would be available.

Because of their federal jurisdiction over all "Waters of the United States of America", which includes the Little Creek and New Hope Creek Corridors, Triangle Transit, its consultants and a representatives of DCHC MPO met with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in August 2010 and August 2011. The guidance provided by the USACE is based on their understanding of the AA process and their role as a regulatory agency throughout and beyond the NEPA process.

As you are aware, Triangle Transit remains committed to public involvement, sustaining and protecting our natural and cultural resources and meeting the standards required by federal as well as state and local governments. As we proceed with the conclusion of the AA process and all of the effort related to the planning, development and operation of public transportation facilities for the DCHC MPO and the region, we will continue to do so.

Please let us know if you would like any additional information regarding this issue.

Sincerely,



Greg Northcutt, Director  
Capital Development

Copy: David King, General Manager  
Wib Gulley, General Counsel  
Patrick McDonough, Sr. Transportation Planner



December 15, 2011

CIN: 110185

Mr. Dee Freeman, Secretary,  
N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources,  
1601 Mail Service Center,  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1601

Subject: Correspondence from Ms. Linda Pearsall, Director,  
DENR Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs

Dear Secretary Freeman:

The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance regarding correspondence containing misleading information which has been sent to the public and the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) under the signature of Ms. Linda Pearsall, Director, Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs.

These letters have implied that the DCHC MPO should not make a decision regarding the advancement of a proposed LRT project between Chapel Hill and East Durham until a more detailed evaluation of the environmental impacts are undertaken. This opinion does not accurately reflect the nature of the federally prescribed process currently underway, the purpose of which is to *identify a project for further study* in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). While the environmental significance and sensitive nature of the Little Creek and New Hope Creek corridors is unquestionable, Triangle Transit has and will continue to follow the federal process which has been established to safeguard environmental resources and avoid, minimize and mitigate environmental impacts.

At the request of the DCHC MPO and Capital Area MPO, Triangle Transit prepared Alternatives Analyses (AAs) for corridors identified in the 2035 Joint DCHC CAMPO Long Range Transportation Plans for proposed major transit investments. AAs are the first of many phases in the iterative Federal Project Planning and Development Process that transit projects must undergo if they are seeking public funding. Through the AA process a corridor between Chapel Hill and East Durham (the Durham/Orange corridor) was evaluated in order to identify the most appropriate initial transit investment or Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that would be advanced for detailed evaluation in accordance with NEPA. AAs were also performed on corridors between West Durham and East Garner (Durham/Wake) and Cary Parkway and Triangle Town Center (Wake).

The purpose of the AA is to identify the project termini, alignment, technology and general station locations of a proposed project that would undergo detailed evaluation in accordance with the NEPA *before* it could be advanced into the final design phase. However, before the NEPA process (Scoping) can begin, the MPO must adopt the project as a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

Secretary Dee Freeman  
December 15, 2011  
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Unfortunately the term Locally Preferred Alternative is also used to identify the project that is defined after completion of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For roadway projects in the State of North Carolina, this is called the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative, or LEDPA. We are a long way from achieving the LEDPA equivalent in this transit project planning and development process. In comparison to a roadway project, we are nearing the end of what would be comparable to a feasibility study.

In early November 2011, Ms. Juanita Shearer-Swink, a member of our staff received a call from Ms. Melba McGee, Environmental Coordinator in the Legislative and Intergovernmental section of DENR, regarding the AA process. On November 8<sup>th</sup>, as a follow-up to their telephone conversation, Triangle Transit sent Ms. McGee an explanation of the AA process, links to documents on the [www.ourtransitfuture.com](http://www.ourtransitfuture.com) web site, other information clarifying the nature of further study after adoption of the LPA, and the offer of further assistance. To date, we have not received any inquiries from DENR regarding the concerns raised in Ms. Pearsall's letters.

In mid-November we received a copy of a letter which was sent to Mr. John Wilson, by Ms. Pearsall. While the letter acknowledges that DENR expects to participate in the NEPA review, it also states that the information in the AA report is misleading to both the public and local governments because it does not provide a sufficient level of detailed evaluation that would demonstrate the likely environmental impacts or the delays that may be necessary to comply with NEPA or other environmental regulations.

On December 1<sup>st</sup> we requested a meeting with Ms. Pearsall and DENR staff, and provided specific dates within December in order to ensure that the meeting would take place in advance of the final stages of the DCHC MPO decision-making process. The response from Ms. Pearsall, which was received on December 5<sup>th</sup>, indicated that none of those dates were feasible. With the assistance of Ms. McGee, January 10, 2012 was identified as the first date on which DENR staff would be available to meet with us. It is our understanding that the meeting will be attended by staff from the Division of Air Quality, NC Wildlife Resources Commission and the Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs.

On December 7<sup>th</sup> we received a copy of a letter to Mr. Andy Henry, DCHC MPO from Ms. Pearsall. The letter, which indicates that DENR's comments are being provided at the request of two different citizen's groups references the inadequacy of the AA documents. It concludes with a recommendation that the concerns of other interested parties such as the US Army Corps of Engineers, NC Wildlife Commission Durham County Planning Department and several local conservation organizations should be discussed in the AA.

The AA documents issued in July 2011 identified US Army Corps owned land associated with Little Creek, and wetlands and floodplains associated with both the Little Creek and New Hope Creek stream systems. Federal law requires that alternatives to impacting wetland and streams be studied and where possible those impacts are to be avoided. Where impacts are unavoidable all efforts to minimize harm will be explored and impacts will be mitigated.



Secretary Dee Freeman  
December 15, 2011  
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Since the Significant Natural Heritage boundaries for both Little Creek and New Hope Creek closely follow the approximate wetland boundaries, they are also addressed by the protection of wetlands under the Clean Water Act. While the AA identified that additional study in accordance with federal, state and local regulations must be undertaken in order to advance a proposed project beyond the very conceptual level reflected in the AA, Addendum 1 was issued in August 2011. This Addendum was intended to clarify any misunderstanding of the degree to which further studies of potential effects to environmental resources would be undertaken subsequent to the adoption of an LPA.

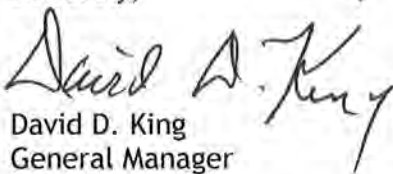
Because of their federal jurisdiction over all "Waters of the United States of America", which includes the Little Creek and New Hope Creek Corridors, Triangle Transit, its consultants, and a representatives of DCHC MPO met with the US Army Corps of Engineers (UCACE) in August 2010 and August 2011. The guidance provided by the USACE is based on their understanding of the AA process and their role as a regulatory agency throughout and beyond the NEPA process.

We find it most unfortunate that Ms. Pearsall, representing DENR, found it necessary to cast doubt on the adequacy of the AA documents and thereby the integrity of another public agency. Her actions have fostered the impression that the DCHC MPO decision-making process is flawed and pre-mature, by not taking into account environmental impacts that cannot be accurately determined until more details are developed on the actual project to be advanced through the NEPA process.

I would like to meet with you in advance of the January 10, 2012 closure of the DCHC MPO Public Comment period. We believe that the public and decision-makers should receive from DENR a more accurate representation of the level of evaluation necessary at this point in the project development and LPA adoption process, thereby enabling them to make a sufficiently informed decision regarding a project that is to be advanced through the NEPA process.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

  
David D. King  
General Manager

Copy: Wib Gulley, General Counsel  
Greg Northcutt, Director, Capital Development  
Mark Ahrendsen, Chair, DCHC MPO TCC



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**B. EVERETT JORDAN DAM AND LAKE**  
P.O. Box 144  
MONCURE, NORTH CAROLINA 27559

December 22, 2011

DCHC-MPO Transportation Advisory Committee  
Attn: Mr. Andy Henry, Transportation Planner  
101 City Hall Plaza, 4th Floor  
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Dear Mr. Henry:

This letter is in response to the Durham, Chapel Hill, Carrboro - Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC-MPO) Transportation Advisory Committee's request for public comments as part of the Locally Preferred Alternative selection process for the proposed Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) Light Rail Transit project. We have reviewed the TTA Durham-Orange County Corridor Alternatives Analysis report.

As depicted in the report Alignment C1 (Sheets C1-03 and 04) and Alignment C2 (Sheet C2-02, 03, and 04) would cross government property under the stewardship of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) at B. Everett Jordan Lake. Alignment C1 is identified as the preferred alternative. The report also depicts an alternative alignment that would not cross government property; the green line shown on Sheet C1-04A. This unnamed alternative does however cross private property on which the government holds a flowage easement. We have not received a request for use of government property from the TTA.

The TTA report refers to the potential for impacts to government property at Jordan Lake but provides no specific information on impacts. If the TTA chooses to submit a request for a right-of-way easement crossing government property the request should clearly demonstrate why alternatives that do not adversely impact government property were not selected. This would include information on the direct, secondary, and cumulative impacts to resources on and off of government property for each alternative. Based on the limited information provided, it appears that Alignment C1 would have more adverse impacts to government property and resources than Alignment C2.

The congressionally authorized purposes of the Jordan Lake project are flood control, water supply, water quality, recreation, and fish and wildlife conservation. In addition to these authorized purposes, the permanent wildlife lands in the area of the proposed crossings serve as mitigation for adverse impacts from construction of Jordan Lake. The area is leased to the State of North Carolina and managed by the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission (NCWRC) as part of their game lands program. Portions of a Significant Natural Heritage Area as designated by the NC Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) are located in the alignments. The alignments are also within the lake's flood storage pool, which is subject to inundation up to elevation 245 feet mean sea level. A route crossing government property must be avoided and

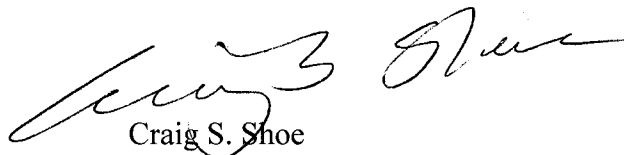


minimize adverse impacts to these resources. Mitigation would be required for unavoidable adverse impacts.

Government property at Jordan Lake is administered by the USACE Wilmington District Operations Division. Requests for use of government property at Jordan Lake should be submitted in writing to my office. Requests are reviewed in compliance with USACE policies for out-granting of government property and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The determination to approve or deny a requested use would be made after the review process has been completed and the requirements of NEPA have been satisfied. It is our understanding that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) (based on use of federal funding) and the USACE Regulatory Division (based on possible impacts to jurisdictional wetlands) will also be involved in the route selection process. Coordination to satisfy NEPA requirements among federal agencies will facilitate the process.

We appreciate the efforts by the TTA and DCHC-MPO to address the need for efficient and effective public transportation. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you require any additional information please contact Mr. Michael Hosey at 919-542-4501 extension 26.

Sincerely,



Craig S. Shoe  
Operations Project Manager  
B. Everett Jordan Dam & Lake  
Cape Fear River Locks & Dams

Copy Furnished:  
NCWRC - Isaac Harrold  
NCWRC - Travis Wilson  
NCNHP - Linda Pearsall  
USACE Regulatory – Jean Gibby  
USACE Regulatory – John Thomas



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Office of Conservation, Planning, and Community Affairs

Beverly Eaves Perdue  
Governor

Linda Pearsall  
Director

Dee Freeman  
Secretary

January 3, 2012

Ms. Lydia Lavelle, Chair  
Durham-Carrboro Chapel Hill Transportation Advisory Committee  
Durham Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Dear Ms. Lavelle:

I am writing to correct misunderstandings that I may have caused by my December 7 letter to Andy Henry regarding the process used for the Alternatives Analysis for the Light Rail Transit corridor proposed between Durham and Chapel Hill. In my letter, I requested that the Alternative Analysis address the possible environmental impacts that may result from the proposed C-1 alignment.

In response to my letter, Mr. David King, General Manager of Triangle Transit, and two of his staff came to Raleigh to meet with me and Secretary Dee Freeman to explain the planning process that is being used to support this light rail project. Mr. King clarified that the detailed environmental work called for in my December letter will be integrated into the next phase of the proposed project, as part of the development of NEPA documents.

As a result of our meeting, I now have a much better grasp of the process that Triangle Transit and the Durham-Carrboro Chapel Hill MPO are using to support the proposed rail project. I am confident that MPO and Transit staff will work closely with Natural Heritage Program staff to address our concerns about the possible impacts of alignment C-1 to the Little Creek Bottoms Significant Natural Heritage Area and the associated important wildlife habitats.

I plan to attend the public hearing for the project on January 11 and hope to provide information at that time as well. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Linda Pearsall

LPP/lpp

1601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1601  
Phone: 919-715-4195 \ FAX: 919-715-3060 Internet: [www.oneNCAaturally.org](http://www.oneNCAaturally.org)

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919.560.4137 | F 919.560.4641

[www.durhamnc.gov](http://www.durhamnc.gov)



January 12, 2012

Andy Henry  
DCHC MPO  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Transportation Department  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Andy,

As the discussion regarding the Durham-Orange Corridor Alternatives Analysis progresses, the Durham City-County Planning Department would like to take the opportunity to clarify our comments concerning the identified Operations and Maintenance Facilities, written in a letter dated November 4, 2011.

As the initial letter acknowledges, there are significant land use barriers and concerns at each of the identified sites for the Operations and Maintenance Facility. However, it was not our intention to endorse any of the four initial sites as being the appropriate location for the facility. We acknowledge that describing the site on Cornwallis Road and Western Bypass as “preferable” could be misleading to readers and to the intent of our comments, which were only to point out the potential land use and regulatory hurdles that each site may have. Though the Cornwallis site is not a recommended site, it was our intent to only clarify that it is the lone site of the four initial sites that has the appropriate existing zoning and land use designations to accommodate the potential use. Certainly, as analysis of each of these sites continues, a full evaluation of neighborhood context will be a key component.

In recognition that identifying a location for an Operations and Maintenance Facility will be a difficult, yet necessary, task, we believe there are other options that should be explored in greater detail in addition to the sites already identified. Durham City-County Planning will continue to work with the community and project partners to explore all possibilities.

If our comments raise any questions please feel free to contact us. We look forward to engaging in ongoing conversations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven L. Medlin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Steven L. Medlin, AICP

Durham City-County Planning Director

cc: Keith Luck, AICP, Assistant Director

Patrick Young, AICP, Assistant Director

Aaron Cain, AICP, Planning Supervisor

Hannah Jacobson, Planner

Ellen Reckhow, Chair  
Board of Trustees  
Triangle Transit Authority  
4600 Emperor Blvd. Suite 100  
Durham, NC 27703  
Re: Light Rail Crossing over the New Hope Creek

Dear Chair Reckhow,

As you well know from your long service, Durham's Open Space and Trails Commission (DOST) seeks, as a primary goal, "(t)o plan for the preservation of environmentally significant sites such as scenic stream corridors, Durham County Inventory sites, wetlands, and other lands which represent Durham's natural heritage."

DOST generally supports the goals of mass transit as it serves to foster smart growth, the reduction of sprawl, and the preservation of environmental resources. Indeed, DOST supported the recent transit sales tax referendum, but we were disappointed to discover the

proposed light rail transit crossings at Sandy Creek and New Hope Creek cutting through environmentally important and intact stream corridors previously protected through DOST efforts and public funds. The unnecessary creation of a new corridor mid-way between two established road corridors (map and letters attached) introduces great environmental damage

to this sensitive area and further harms our long-term water quality needs.

Through a resolution passed 11/16/2011 (attached), DOST opposes any new corridors through this area and asks the TTA to revise the light rail transit plan to place the transit corridor through the existing right-of-way for Highway 15-501 (or other existing road corridor) as it crosses the New Hope Creek Corridor/Floodplain and the Sandy Creek Corridor/Floodplain. In this way Durham can develop a mass transit system without needlessly sacrificing our few remaining sensitive natural areas in that region.

Sincerely,

Will Wilson, Chair  
Durham Open Space and Trails Commission

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**From:** Toby Berla

**Date:** January 3, 2012 9:24:51 PM EST

**To:** [Comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:Comments@dchcmpo.org)

**Subject:** Rail Transit Alternatives Analysis

I am unable to attend the public hearing on January 11. However, I strongly encourage the development of a rail corridor alignment that minimizes any impact on the sensitive creek areas by building in one of the existing roadway corridors.

This recommendation was endorsed by the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission, consistent with existing open space and trails master plans.

I would further urge that all rail corridor designs explicitly consider and specify connections with existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities, to allow the maximum level of intermodal use by non-polluting vehicles and users.

Regards,

Toby Berla

member of DOST, liaison to BPAC

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December 5, 2011

DCHC-MPO Transportation Advisory Committee

Re: Durham-Orange County Corridor Alternatives Analysis

Dear Transportation Advisory Committee members:

Attached is a letter I received on Nov. 15 from Linda Pearsall, director of the N.C. Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs, in which Ms. Pearsall refers to Triangle Transit's Durham-Orange County Corridor Alternatives Analysis as "misleading to both the public and local governments."

**In light of the content of the DENR letter, and additional information below, I respectfully request that the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee solicit written comment on the Durham-Orange Alternatives Analysis from the N.C. Natural Heritage Program, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and make such comments available to the public and local decision makers as soon as possible.**

**I also request that the DCHC-MPO TAC's timeline regarding public comment, local government input, and voting on locally preferred alternatives be extended if necessary to allow adequate time for consideration of this important information.**

In the Durham-Orange Alternatives Analysis (AA), Triangle Transit labeled as its "preferred alignment" the C1 alignment option from the Friday Center in Chapel Hill to the proposed Leigh Village development in southwest Durham. The C1 alignment would cut through a forested portion of a state-designated Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA) in Durham County, which includes federal wetlands managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and state game lands managed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. An alternative



alignment option, "C2," would minimize impact to the natural area by following NC 54 east from the Friday Center and George King Road north to Leigh Village.

SNHA designations are made by the N.C. Natural Heritage Program (NHP), part of DENR's conservation office. According to NHP's mission statement, "The program inventories, catalogues, and supports conservation of the rarest and the most outstanding elements of the natural diversity of our state."

NHP's 1999 *Durham County Inventory of Important Natural Areas, Plants and Wildlife* was funded in part by the Durham County Board of Commissioners, and adopted by the City and County as part of the Durham comprehensive plan. In 2010, NHP documented that the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes SNHA (aka "Natural Inventory site") in Durham County "contains one of the last remnants in the state of the large bottomland forests that once dominated the Triassic Basins and still supports a high diversity of the wildlife typical of this region...The upland buffers surrounding the wildlife impoundments...are particularly important...This buffer could be completely eliminated, drastically affecting the entire ecosystem associated with the floodplain forest."

In her Nov. 15 letter, Director Pearsall states: "We are particularly concerned about Alternative C1, since it crosses the SNHA along a currently undisturbed alignment and is therefore likely to have a more significant impact on wildlife than C2, which lies within the already disturbed transportation corridor along NC 54."

Ms. Pearsall's letter points out that the "Environmental Impacts" section of the AA makes no mention of the SNHA's presence or significance. Pearsall also notes that the AA fails to mention the importance of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wetlands as wildlife habitat, or that the area is managed as state game land by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

"We believe that these issues should be included upfront in the scoping phase for the project as a Locally Preferred Alternative is considered," Pearsall wrote. "Presenting the findings of this study as is – particularly with preferred alternatives already identified – is misleading to both the public and local governments, who are being asked to endorse the findings of this document without full knowledge of the likely impacts, or of the delays that may be necessary to comply with NEPA or other environmental regulations."

In the AA, Triangle Transit's project team recommends advancing both the C1 and C2 alignment options to the Preliminary Engineering (PE)/National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) phase "in order to provide an opportunity for continued study." The costs to taxpayers of sending both C1 and C2 to the PE/NEPA phase will be substantial, and should be carefully considered.



The issues Ms. Pearsall has raised will likely be extremely important to area citizens and elected officials at this point in the process. The comprehensive plans of Durham City and County, Orange County and the Town of Chapel Hill each contain specific language regarding protecting critical natural areas. Carrboro, Hillsborough and Chatham County have strong environmental standards as well.

Durham's comprehensive plan states as a goal to "identify and protect sites that provide habitat for biologically significant plant and animal species and serve as critical corridors for animal movements."

Orange County's comprehensive plan cites statistics regarding the loss of "prime forestland," "significant natural areas," and "the ecological integrity of natural areas that support wildlife." The Orange County plan states that "land planning efforts will need to direct growth to designated areas and away from prime natural areas."

Chapel Hill's comprehensive plan lists as a goal to "identify, protect and preserve open spaces and critical natural areas..."

In light of the DENR letter, the environmental priorities of the municipalities and counties comprising the DCHC-MPO, and the significant taxpayer cost of PE/NEPA studies, I appreciate your consideration of my requests in the second and third paragraphs of this letter.

Thank you very much.

John Wilson

Orange County

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Linda Pearsall, Program Director  
The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

Dear Ms. Pearsall,

The New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee is a body set up in 1992 by the City and County of Durham, Orange County and the Town of Chapel Hill to advise them on implementation of the New Hope Corridor Plan. (1) The Committee is presently reviewing a Triangle Transit draft Alternatives Analysis (AA) study that will identify a "Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)" for a Light Rail Transit (LRT) "mainline" between Chapel Hill and Durham. (2)

The route currently identified as "preferred" is shown crossing the bottomlands of the New Hope Creek Corridor at a new "mid-block" location, south of 15-501 and north of Old Chapel Hill Road, and running east-west between the vicinity of Garrett Road and Southwest Durham Drive (previously known as Watkins Road). (3) The area of this proposed crossing is identified in the NCNHP's Durham County Inventory of Important

Natural Areas, Plants and Wildlife as "the 15/501 Bottomlands," a significant natural area occupying "a highly strategic location within the New Hope Wildlife Corridor... between the New Hope Gamelands and the Korstian and Durham Divisions of Duke Forest." The Executive Summary of the Inventory goes on to state that, the "New Hope Creek Bottomland Forest [which includes the 15/501 Bottomlands as an internal section] contains some of the best Piedmont/Mountain Swamp Forest and Piedmont/Mountain Bottomland Forest remaining in North Carolina. ... The 800-acre site also provides important wildlife habitat." (4)

The Inventory also states (pdf p. 77) that the "15/501 Bottomlands" area is an "extensive tract of bottomland hardwood forest providing habitat needed by forest-interior species," and that it is a "critical link in the New Hope and Mud Creek Wildlife Corridors." It says (pdf p. 21), "the sites that comprise the New Hope Corridor...combine to create a macro-site that is ranked as Regionally Significant, based not only on its overall size and habitat values, but also on its connections to other key refuge areas in Orange and Chatham counties." ) It further states (pdf p. 46) "that the sites identified in [the Inventory, of which the 15/501 Bottomlands is one,] still possess functioning ecosystems is probably as much a reflection of the strength of the connection between them as their intrinsic features such as size, forest maturity, of lack of internal fragmentation. In a connected system of natural areas, population losses at any one site can to some degree be compensated by animals moving in from sites where reproduction has been more successful."

The Inventory expresses its concern about threats to connectivity in the area in question. In describing the "Mount Moriah Bottomlands and Slopes," the next New Hope Corridor natural area site up stream (and across US 15-501) from the 15/501 Bottomlands, it states the area's "proximity to the rapidly developing US 15-501 commercial strip also makes it the link in this [corridor] system most likely to break, at least with regard to the more disturbance-sensitive species of wildlife." (pdf p. 58) It speaks of the openness to wildlife of this section of the New Hope Wildlife Corridor being kept, in part, by "the existence of large tracts of unfragmented bottomlands on either side of the highway." (pdf p. 59)

There is an additional concern expressed in the Inventory regarding the floodplain nature of most of the Corridor lands in the area in question. "Buffers areas are ...needed to protect key tracts along even some of the largest expanses of forested habitat found in the region. Despite their size and fairly high level of protection, most of the protected sites along New Hope Creek ... are essentially bottomlands. During the winter floods, most of their acreage can be under water,... [One] of the main consequences of development of the adjoining uplands is that all the habitat available to certain terrestrial species will again become "edge," at least during the late winter - typically during the time when stresses on animal populations are at their greatest." (pdf p. 45)

The New Hope Advisory Committee is concerned that building the mainline of a transit system directly through this wetland ecosystem would have significant negative impacts on the natural functions that have been identified by the Inventory.

The draft TTA document also proposes up slope and to the west of the 15/501 Bottomlands, an 18 acre "Patterson Place Maintenance Facility" with a rail line spur, along the western edge of the New Hope Creek floodplain, to connect the Facility with the LRT mainline, LPA, route mentioned above. In addition to the problem of its

covering land up slope from the 15/501 Bottomlands with a significant amount of impervious surface we feel a facility that would wash rail cars and store and use lubricants and other chemicals, a "spill" type land use, could pose special long term negative impacts to the Corridor. (5)

There is also proposed, also up slope and to the west of the 15/501 Bottomlands, a "Patterson Place" LRT station, just to the west of SW Durham Drive. . This is the easternmost, and nearest to the 15/501 Bottomlands, of the several locations considered. (6) It is our opinion that any LRT station area will be the focus of intense development, "crucial to the viability of the LRT project" (as the project proponents put it) and will have potential long term negative impacts on the Corridor. This would be especially so for a LRT station area located just west of SW Durham Drive.

The Committee is profoundly concerned about the impacts to natural systems and to recreational and educational uses that would be created by any crossings of the New Hope Creek Corridor, except where crossings currently exist. (7) Any rail line structures built for a transit system, even elevated, will permanently fragment the Corridor and introduce noise and vibration into it. (8)

The Committee believes there is an alternative route with much less environmental impact. It would go directly adjacent to the south side of new US 15-501 bridge. One clear advantage of this route for an LRT alignment across the New Hope Creek floodplain is that it would avoid not only the new break in the forest canopy but also the two additional edge areas that the proposed "mid-block" alignment would impact, since it would use the existing edge area along the south side of the existing US 15-501 right-of-way. (9) We also believe there are better areas, away from the slopes above the Corridor lands, than those proposed for an LRT maintenance facility and a transit station.

The Committee is writing to request the NC Natural Heritage Program to review and comment on the transit corridor proposed by Triangle Transit as it relates to the resources identified in the NHP natural resources inventory studies. It would be most helpful if the Program could answer the question of impacts to the New Hope Creek Corridor of the proposed "mid-block" transit route and an alternative route directly adjacent to the south side of new US 15-501 bridge. Also, comments on impacts to the New Hope Creek Corridor of the sites proposed for an LRT maintenance facility (and connecting rail spur) and a transit station would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

Robert G. Healy  
Chair, New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

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From: Ali Fromme  
Sent: Friday, November 11, 2011 8:03 AM  
To: comments@dchcmmpo.org  
Subject: Light Rail Transit - support for C2

I am a resident of Meadowmont and am writing in support of the C2 option for the Light Rail Transit. When comparing facts regarding cost, ridership, impact on the environment, infrastructure and disruption to the quality of life in Meadowmont, C2 seems to be a far superior option on all fronts.

Thank you  
Ali Fromme

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From: Anne Boyer  
Sent: Tuesday, November 08, 2011 4:27 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Fw: Light Rail Plans C1 and C2

Mr. Andrew Henry and Durham, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Metropolitan Planning Organization,

I am certainly not opposed to light rail or any other form of public transportation. It is the safe and smart way to transport people now and in the future. As a matter of fact, I just voted for a transportation sales tax increase for Durham County.

However, I am vehemently opposed to the light rail plan designated C1 that would run from Duke Hospital to UNC Hospital. This plan would adversely affect my neighborhood of Meadowmont and the Cedars Retirement and Continuing Care Community where I live, destroying woods and wet lands nearby.

Are you aware that this ill conceived plan would cut our community in half, endanger our residences who enjoy walking, destroy the beauty of our campus and our quality of life, devalue our property and create havoc and danger zones for those living and seeking health care at our DuBose Health Center?

According to a comparative study of the C1 and C2 plans, the C2 plan which follows HWY 54 and George King Road would be less invasive to the environment and the Meadowmont Community, less expensive to build and would enjoy a greater ridership. Clearly, C2 is the practical choice.

Please join me in promoting responsible government and wise decision making by adopting in January the C2 Alternate Plan for Light Rail between the hospitals of Durham and Chapel Hill.

Thank you for your continued interest in my community and Chapel Hill.

Sincerely yours,

Anne Morgan Boyer

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From: Esther D. Flashner  
Sent: Tuesday, November 08, 2011 5:27 PM  
To: mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org  
Cc: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Construction of the light rail system

Gentlemen: As a member of the Cedars since its inception, I am very much concerned about the plans for the construction of a light rail system connecting Durham to UNC Hospitals. To me, it sounds like an excellent project. However, I would like you to give more thought to the two routes under consideration, and strongly urge you to adopt the one designated as C2.

The C1 route, as the map indicates, would cut directly through THE CEDARS property, and effectively separate our residential areas from our DuBose Health Center. This would have a very destructive effect upon our homes and our residents. The C1 route, on the other hand would minimize the impact upon our development, and, I am told, would also be less costly.

THE CEDARS residents consider themselves very much a part of Meadowmont Village. I urge you not to alienate us from the community by making our living here very difficult. Please do everything you can to insure that the C2 route is adopted.

Sincerely,  
Esther D. Flashner

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From: Bonnie Simms  
Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2011 11:46 AM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Light Rail C-1 and C-2 alternative routes  
November 10, 2011  
Attn: Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

As a resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill, I am very concerned about the proposal to build a light rail system through our community. I strongly support the C-2 alternative route.

Granted, the C-1 alternative has been on the books since our neighborhood was conceived.

However, if one looks at the way that Meadowmont Village, the UNC Wellness Center, and The Cedars have developed, most reasonable people would be convinced of the folly of proceeding with this route.

The C-1 alternative would run through The Cedars, separating our 48 bed DuBose Health Center from the rest of our community. Our residents frequently walk or drive to the Health Center to visit patients or for clinic appointments; crossing a double track with trains every five or ten minutes would pose a dangerous challenge, particularly for those with the disabilities of age. For that matter, walking anywhere in Meadowmont would be difficult for many of our 400 residents, since the C-1 route would effectively separate the Cedars from the shops and walking paths.

Because of the age and sometimes fragile state of The Cedars' residents, emergency service vehicles make frequent visits, when speed often means the difference between life and death. A stop at the tracks could delay these vehicles by several important minutes.

The C-2 alternative route is preferable to the C-1 route for several reasons.

- C-2 would be considerably less expensive, by \$30 to \$60 million.
- C-2 would have less impact on the wetlands of Little Creek since it would cross this watershed at the established Highway 54 corridor over a channelized portion of the creek rather than through virgin bottom land.
- C-2 is projected to have a greater ridership potential due to the proposed office/commercial/residential development and parking facility at the Woodmont Station location on Highway 54. Conversely, parking at the suggested Meadowmont Station site on the C-1 route is limited to the lot servicing the Harris Teeter store.

I would be happy to take you on a tour of our community so that you can visualize the potential impact of the C-1 alternative.

Thank you for your attention.

Bonnie Simms

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Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 11:14 AM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Fwd: light rail transit plan

Members of the Metropolitan Planning Organization,

As a taxpayer and resident of the Cedars Retirement Community in Durham County I strongly recommend the C2 alternative for the proposed light rail transit

system.

Elizabeth Little

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First, let me extend warm congratulations to both the Mayor, returning members of the Council and those newly elected-and the Tar Heels on their “mission accomplished” out West.

The light rail topic is a very important one for Chapel Hill and its citizens and one in which many of us have closely followed over the years. Its success in both Durham and Chapel Hill spell significant outcomes for the future success of our communities, and that is why I, along with many others, have come to you today to support the C2 option, the better alternative. What this isn't is a rejection of light rail altogether. I think light rail has come, and it's time we embraced the future, however, what's ultimately important is how it affects our communities, our natural resources, and, in these difficult, financially unpredictable times, our finances.

For those of us in the Meadowmont community, the current option, C1, would cut a swath down Meadowmont Lane with unfortunate, and many of us would argue, unacceptable outcomes to the Cedars retirement community, especially its special care buildings which would be seriously affected by a two-way rail system passing far too close by with vibration a likely consequence. The rail would introduce a significant increase in traffic, green-space reduction, overall congestion, not to mention create a parking problem since there would be no dedicated parking other than the Village and Harris Teeter spaces which are already increasingly under strain. Furthermore, for the vast majority of residents in Meadowmont, the rail would not be something that folks would simply walk to on a regular basis due to distance and weather conditions, but would instead, likely drive their car to a space nearby. I think the most significant argument in support of the C2 option, is the environmental consequences from the current, C1 option. C1 would have a two-way rail system cut thru a pristine, wooded area, one of the City's last unspoiled areas that remains to this day a popular area for lovers of nature, joggers and even hunters I'm told. The project would see a multi-year construction project creating a bridge system over the wetlands at a significant added costs in the millions of dollars. Furthermore, just the overall construction project and what it would do to the surrounding hills and other formations would be catastrophic. As we all know when it comes to preserving what's left of our precious resources: “When you lose it, there is no path back.”

The C2 option, on the other hand, addresses many of these important concerns by avoiding both significant environmental and community damage and disruption, especially to the natural environment that exists next to the Rizzo Center, the Wetlands and the Cedars and Meadowmont Communities. C2, according to its current organizers, also projects a higher ridership, with a plan for offices and dedicated parking in the Woodmont/Hillmont Village proposal. This is a win-win for both the success of the light rail system, its riders and



members of the community. C2 is also projected to save from \$30-\$40 million dollars, not a small amount of money in these difficult times.

In a nutshell, C2 is just a better, more appropriate solution for the community at large. With a dedicated plan for success; far less environmental destruction and community dislocation; at a more reasonable cost; and what really is the sine qua non of success of a transportation system like this to begin with and that's ridership, which C2 clearly wins out on.

This isn't about-and sorry for the double negative-not supporting light rail. This is about supporting a light rail option that is the most successful for the community at large, that does the least amount of unnecessary damage to our precious resources that we all are destined to preserve, that helps to reduce costs and respects the needs of our community members.

And this isn't about a "not in my backyard" mentality. For many of us, if not most of us in both Meadowmont and the Cedars, these "projects", concluded many years before our moving in by the developer and the powers-that-be -and not exactly openly and clearly revealed either by the developer, their broker or even the individual's broker for that matter-seem to pop up from time to time. Examples include a previous proposal in making Meadowmont Lane a major thoroughfare and traffic artery (never mind folk's homes and Ratchiss Elementary), and now the Light Rail project. The sanctimonious argument that we give up our right to favor C2 because we live in Meadowmont or the Cedars, because, ipso facto, we've bought into C1 via our "notice" and ownership in the community is misleading at a minimum, factually incorrect, if not insulting. Things change, plans change, our community values change, and this is such a case where a new plan is simply a better one. And members of both Meadowmont and the Cedars have been put right smack in the middle of this decision-quite literally-and many of us in the community simply want to exercise what is still our right as citizens put in an awkward place and wish to throw our support behind a better plan for Chapel Hill, for the environment and for its citizens.

In closing, this is Chapel Hill's 12th consecutive year as a Tree City, having also just been awarded the 2010 Tree City USA Award, and if we're going to still uphold and husband our Town's great tradition of stewardship of the environment, C2's a good place to carry that honor forward.

Thank you members of the Council, Mr. Mayor, members of the Community and I hope you'll support the best option available: C2.

Geoffrey Daniel Geist

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From: Edmund Glover  
Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2011 3:59 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Fwd: Favor C2 route for LRT

> Two primary concerns in regard to the C1 route:

>> 1. Concerns for elderly population at The Cedars of Chapel Hill:  
> EMS vehicles are called here frequently. Encroachment on access  
and egress routes will be slowed or impeded by rail traffic.

Getting to and from the Cedars clinics and nursing home for residents of this  
continuing care retirement center will be difficult, even dangerous. Quality of recovery in  
the nursing

> home will, I believe, be diminished due to the closeness of the  
> route to the facility.

> 2. Children, parents and staff at elementary school on Meadowmont  
> Lane. C1's rail crossing will be unavoidable for them.

> We believe the estimated ridership from original station placements  
> should be reevaluated. Evolving development, and habits and needs of  
> persons using/living in present locations, may throw new light on the  
> original estimated use of the light rail. As Meadowmont has developed  
> will there be adequate parking available for the riders?

> For the above, as well as other more publicized reasons,

> WE PREFER THE C2 ROUTE

> Edmund and Jean Glover

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From: Hugh M Boyer  
Sent: Sunday, November 13, 2011 4:46 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew

SUBJECT: Support of the C2 Route for the Proposed Light Rail System

When you examine the alternative routes of the Chapel Hill- Durham light rail I ask that you  
select the C2 as the route of choice. Although the C1 route already has some dedicated  
right-of-way, upon examination today it would show up as the least desirable of the two.

The C2 is far less disturbing to the area's neighborhoods and wildlife habitats, and the  
estimates show it can be built at less cost.

I strongly urge you to reject the C1 route.

Hugh M. Boyer

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Sent: Friday, November 11, 2011 12:07 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Light Rail

November 11, 2011

Attn: Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

I am a resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill. I am very concerned about the proposed light rail route, specifically the C-1 alternative, which would run between our cottages and our Health Center. Our neighborhood would essentially be divided by this rail line, forcing our 400 residents to cross a double track and dodge frequent trains on their way to and from visits with patients at the Health Center and to the DuBose Clinic, the UNC Wellness Center, the Harris Teeter store, and the Meadowmont Village shops and restaurants. The delays caused by train crossings could also seriously impede the arrival of emergency vehicles to aid our aging population.

The alternate route, C-2, is vastly preferable due to the following factors: C-2 is considerably less expensive; C-2 would traverse the Little Creek wetlands over the established Highway 54 corridor rather than through virgin bottom lands; C-2 would access the proposed office/commercial/residential project and the accompanying parking structure to be developed along Highway 54. The station shown on C-1 on Meadowmont Lane is located in a busy part of Meadowmont, which would limit parking and access to the stores. Traffic to the station would also increase congestion on the main road of Meadowmont.

Although I realize that the C-1 route is the route of record, a cursory study of the pattern of development of Meadowmont Village would certainly favor the C-2 route. I trust that you will consider these factors in your deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.

Harry R. Phillips

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From: Joan Bingham

Sent: Monday, November 07, 2011 12:29 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Light Rail

We moved to Durham County in 2003. We live at The Cedars of Chapel Hill. One of the reasons we chose to retire here was the thought that had gone into the planning of the area

and community. We think Light rail is needed, but at what price. The C1 route would be a poor choice for little gain. I seems to me that the C2 is a much better option. Please consider it carefully.

Joan Bingham

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From: Muriel Roll  
Sent: Saturday, November 05, 2011 3:58 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: LRT  
Saturday, November 05, 2011

Dear Andrew

Information being circulated about the 2011 Sales and Use Tax Referendums brought attention to a possible light commuter rail to run between downtown Durham and UNC Hospital. As a senior resident of The Cesars of Chapel Hill and also a member of the Meadowmont Community Association, I strongly support the C2 alternative for the following reasons:

1. C2 avoids a major impact on the environment by not having the route pass through the wetlands.
2. C2 is a less expensive alternative with the promise of yielding greater use by commuters.
3. C2 avoids disruption to the quality of life at the Cedars, the DuBose Health Center and Meadowmont.

Your careful consideration of this information is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Muriel Roll

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From: Eleanor Lamb  
Sent: Sunday, November 06, 2011 9:41 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Light Rail System

Dear Mr. Henry:

As residents of the Cedars of Chapel Hill in Meadowmont, we have become increasingly aware of the plans for the Light Rail System between UNC and Duke Hospitals.

In a meeting we attended recently it was, for the first time, carefully outlined and explained to us, along with C2, the alternative option that has been put forth. After careful consideration and thought given to both plans, we have concluded that C2 seems to be a much better alternative, not only for the Cedars, but

1. for those who would be asked to fund it, because it would be less expensive than C1.
2. for those who would be impacted by noise, vibration, delays on main streets to let trains pass, unsightly tracks below and above, throughout the quiet, residential neighborhood of Meadowmont.
3. for those who have children who could be endangered if they lived or played near a speeding train.
4. for those who have preserved and use the beautiful and unique natural wetlands area near the Rizzo Center that would be disrupted in many ways by trains and tracks passing through.

Please give serious consideration to the C2 alternative route. The Light Rail System is going to have a huge, permanent impact on this unique area, and we urge you to think carefully and long about the decisions to be made.

Thank you very much for the attention and thought you will be giving to this matter of great importance to many people, and to North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Eleanor and Hal Lamb

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From: Martha Tyson  
Sent: Sunday, November 13, 2011 4:52 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Light Rail Service

To Whom It May Concern.

A moment of your time to express my great concern over the possibility of this project cutting through The Cedars in Meadowmont. I am strongly against it and would like to tell you why. Other than destroying the wetlands on this route, it would make it impossible for me and others who are confined to motorized wheel chairs to get across this thoroughfare to gain access from our homes to the DuBose Center for our medical care. This is an

overwhelming thought but is also important in that it places our independence in jeopardy. Put yourselves in our place for just a moment. I believe you can see what I am attempting to point out to all who are working on this project.

Martha Tyson

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From: Jane McPherson  
Sent: Sunday, November 06, 2011 6:01 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Light Rail Routes

Dear Mr. Henry,

We wish to express our support for C2 Light Rail Route. It will be less costly with the probability of greater use by commuters. It is environmentally responsible, more so than the alternative C1. We have been Durham taxpayers since 1955. That's a lot of tax money going to our favorite city! We're very proud of Durham, its revitalized downtown, its spirit, and not least of all, its great restaurants!

We plead with you to support C2.

Thanks very much!

Jane H. McPherson

Harry T. McPherson, M. D.

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From: John Neter  
Sent: Friday, November 04, 2011 4:15 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: FW: Light Rail Route Preference for C2

Dear Sir:

I urge you to support Alternative Route C2 for the Light Rail Route. Alternative Route C1 will have a significant negative impact on The Cedars of Chapel Hill Retirement Community. This route passes directly in front of our DuBose Health Center where 48 ill members are staying. Also Route C1 cuts off the Health Center from the homes of the Retirement Community.

Alternative Route C2 does not intrude into the Meadowmont Community. In addition, Route C2 is more environmentally friendly, as it does not cross the adjacent wet lands. Furthermore, it is my understanding that Route C2 is estimated to cost less than Route C1 and is likely to have a higher ridership.

For all of these reasons, please support Route C2.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Neter

John and Dorothy Neter

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From: William Nebel  
Sent: Saturday, November 12, 2011 9:25 AM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Favor Route C-2 for the light rail

Dear Metropolitan Planning Organization Members,  
We STRONGLY OPPOSE ROUTE C-1 of the light rail transit. We do not think it fair to inconvenience a large existing neighborhood PLUS a natural wetlands area when there is a better option.

We STRONGLY FAVOR THE C-2 ROUTE. It follows an existing highway area already used to noise and traffic and follows that through the wetlands area also. It then goes through a much smaller developed neighborhood. We feel this C-2 route would be much less intrusive to all concerned.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ann and Bill Nebel

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From: Phil Purcell  
Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2011 1:48 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Light Rail Transit

Dear Mr. Henry,

On behalf of the nearly 400 residents of The Cedars, a licensed continuing care retirement community in the Meadowmont part of Chapel Hill, I am writing to express our concern over the C1 light rail route that would adversely affect our community and the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant



Natural Heritage Area next to our community.

The C1 route would separate our residences from our DuBose Health Center, a licensed 48-bed skilled nursing facility. The impact of major construction within feet of the Center would be a terrible experience for the Center's aged patients, most of whom are living out their lives there. If the C1 route were to be built, the noise, vibration, disruption and lights would make their remaining years extremely unpleasant. The interruption and blocking of access by trains running on 10 and 20 minute intervals would adversely affect our entire community. The safety concerns for senior citizens with walkers attempting to cross the right of way and children going to the nearby Rashkis grade school are substantial.

Experts have told us that the C1 route would forever pierce, divide and drastically alter the state-designated wetland area known as Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area. The route would destroy a dry-land buffer needed by wildlife during floods as well as adversely affect the entire ecosystem associated with the floodplain forest. Wildlife habitat would be destroyed and part of the Area deforested because construction of the route would cut a much wider swath than the 50-foot right of way alone.

We understand the C2 route would have a far smaller impact on the environment, be less expensive to build and ultimately have greater ridership due to developing nearby communities while Meadowmont is substantially built out. We also understand that C2 is the preferred route of Chapel Hill staff, UNC and UNC Hospitals. We know that C2 would not adversely impact the patients in the DuBose Health Center, the children going to grade school or our neighbors in the Meadowmont Community.

We respectfully request that the C2 route be chosen as the light rail route to be constructed.

Sincerely,  
Phil Purcell

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Sent: Monday, October 31, 2011 10:02 AM

To: Comments@dchcmpo.org

Subject: LRT Route

We have been studying some material re the proposed LRT route. The cost and other factors seem to make the C2 route the obvious better choice.

I feel sure that C2 represents most of the Meadowmont community choice, and certainly the residents of The Cedars of Chapel Hill retirement population.

We urge adoption of the C2 route.

Willard and Caroline Rupert

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From: Tom Christy

Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 12:35 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: light rail

I would like to question the efficacy of light rail for the triangle area. I have recently moved here from the suburbs of Baltimore, which has a light rail system in high density areas at ground level. Although fares are substantial, they do not cover operating costs. The taxpayers of the surrounding counties subsidize the system. Deploying a light rail system will result in property taken, rails, and coaches. The bus system can use existing streets. The rail system will require crossing gates at major roads and closures of less important ones. Track will have to be fenced to prevent pedestrian traffic on the rail right of way.

Upkeep and maintenance will be significantly higher for a rail system. Every 25 years or so new coaches (much more expensive than buses) will be required and track will be worn out and replaced. Once laid, the track is fixed in place, whereas bus routes can be altered to address changing demand. The network is a challenging problem. There is no central city, like Charlotte is. Rather, there are three smaller centers, with lots of real estate in between.

If we are to have light rail, come hell or high water, the C2 route would be preferable to C1. It would be lower cost to build and maintain, require less dedicated infrastructure, have more passengers, and result in less destruction of natural areas.

Thank you for reading this.

Thomas Christy

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From: Marilyn Toelle

Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2011 1:19 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Light rail transit

To the DurhamChapel HillCarrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization: One of the reasons we chose The Cedars of Chapel Hill for our Continuing Care community was the location with easy access to Chapel Hill, Durham as well as to main roads and highways. This community is thriving and ranks one of the highest in the country. Health care is of utmost importance, and the idea of putting a rapid transit train cutting

off the health care portion from the residential is unthinkable, not to mention the environmental impact on the wetlands surrounding this area. Therefore, we strongly urge you to veto the suggested planned C1 route and consider the C2 plan which avoids residential developments and would minimize the impact of a rail system. As taxpayers, we also believe the C2 plan would be less costly to build and have greater ridership. Our concern is for the future of our community.  
Marily & Ron Toelle

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From: Vivian Raftery

Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2011 5:02 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Light rail transit plans

Unlike most Continuing Care Retirement Communities, we at the Cedars pay our own property taxes to Durham County. If this rail plan should go forward, we will watch our own property values drop drastically, despite the fact that this is one of the best retirement communities in the country and adds to the reputation of the Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Durham areas as excellent places to live.

I am not against light rail transit as a way to ease congestion, but finding the most acceptable location for one between Durham and Chapel Hill Hospitals is vital to its success. Therefore, I am for the C2 route as I believe that route will effect the fewest people.

Sincerely,

Vivian Raftery

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From: William W. McLendon

Sent: Sunday, November 13, 2011 3:09 PM

To: mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org; Henry, Andrew

SUBJECT: Support of the C2 Route for the Proposed Light Rail System  
from Chapel Hill to Durham

1. MY PERSPECTIVE: I first came to Chapel Hill as an undergraduate from 1948-52. Since 1952 Anne and I have lived in Chapel Hill for 45 of our 59 years of married life, including the past 7 years as residents of the Cedars retirement community in Meadowmont. From 1973 to 1995 I was a Professor at the UNC School of Medicine and

since 1995 I have been a Professor Emeritus.

**2. I ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORT THE PROPOSED PASSENGER RAIL SYSTEMS FOR CHAPEL HILL AND THE REGION.**

I have experienced the advantages of passenger rail systems when using the rapid transit systems in New York City in the 1950s and the efficient intra- and inter-city transit systems in western Europe in the 1960s. I have witnessed the phenomenal growth in Chapel Hill and the region as a result of the evolution of the internationally acclaimed Research Triangle Park (RTP) and of the three world-class universities that include two schools of engineering, two university medical centers, a college of veterinary medicine and Nobel Laureates. The proposed light rail link between Chapel Hill and Durham, along with the commuter rail service from Durham to RTP and Raleigh, will in effect be a "Boulevard of the Universities" connecting the original and continuing anchors of North Carolina's vibrant Research Triangle area: Duke University, North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**3. I URGE YOU TO REJECT THE C1 ROUTE FOR THE PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM FROM CHAPEL HILL TO DURHAM THAT WILL TRANSECT THE MEADOWMONT AND CEDARS COMMUNITIES. (See attached map.)**

Meadowmont has been in existence for almost a decade and we can now easily see the tangible and destructive effects of the proposed C1 route for the light rail system on the well over 2,000 adults and children living in Meadowmont's 1056 homes, condo units and rental apartments (as of a July 2009 survey):

--Meadowmont was designed, and now functions as, a pedestrian and bicycle friendly community that is enjoyed daily by numerous residents and visitors. Superimposing a railway on this community would defeat this design and do irreversible damage to the community.

-- Having a light rail system crossing Meadowmont Lane (as well as the cross streets of Sprunt Street, Barbee Chapel Road and Meadowmont Village Circle) with trains running at some 10 minute intervals during rush hour will lead to major delays, traffic jams and increased danger to the following pedestrians and drivers using these roads:

- 1) many students and teachers going to and from the Rashkis Elementary School;
- 2) numerous Meadowmont residents commuting to jobs in Chapel Hill, Durham and the RTP, as well as non-residents commuting to jobs in Meadowmont Village;
- 3) elderly persons from the Cedars going to the UNC Wellness Center and to the shops and restaurants in Meadowmont Village;
- 4) those coming from the region to use the UNC Wellness Center and to obtain medical care from the UNC Heart Center and other UNC Health Care facilities at Meadowmont;
- 5) business executives coming from around the country to attend the Executive Development Programs at the Rizzo Center of the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School; and
- 6) first responders answering emergency calls from residents in the Cedars and in

Meadowmont.

-- The proposed light railway would split the Cedars retirement community. It would run some 30 feet from the front of the DuBose Health Center, which today has 48 beds and by the time the rail is built is expected to have 60 to 70 or more beds to serve the over 400 members in the Cedars community. This superb medical facility provides skilled nursing care, under the medical supervision of the UNC Geriatrics Division, for those Cedars members recovering from major surgery, illnesses or injuries, as well as long term care for those with memory impairment or other chronic conditions. Construction and operation of an adjacent rail system would have a major detrimental effect on these patients. In addition, many Cedars members daily go to the DuBose Center to visit friends and neighbors or to receive their primary medical care in the 5-day-a-week clinic staffed by physicians and a nurse practitioner from UNC Geriatrics. If C1 is approved and implemented these members would have the challenge of crossing a busy and dangerous railway to make these visits.

-- The environmental impact of running a railway through the Significant Natural Heritage Area known as the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes with its irreplaceable trees and wildlife is a major disadvantage of the proposed C1 route.

#### 4. I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE C2 ROUTE FOR THE PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM FROM CHAPEL HILL TO DURHAM.

The alternative route C2 will utilize the unpaved George King Road and the center of the Raleigh Road/NC 54 section that is soon to be expanded to 6 lanes. The latter section could be similar to the elevated rapid transit system from ORD airport to the Loop in Chicago.

--Cost. The C1 Meadowmont route will result in additional major costs to bridge the wilderness areas and to cross the highly developed and densely populated areas of Meadowmont Village, whereas the C2 route will go down an unpaved road in an area with sparse population density and then proceed down a highway right of way that is soon to be expanded to six lanes. Selecting the C2 route now would allow the inclusion of this route in the planning for the expansion of the Raleigh Road and for the eventual upgrading of the George King Road, so that the planning costs and disruptions could be minimized for both future projects.

-- Environmental impact. Route C2 eliminates the necessity to have elevated tracks over the unique waterfowl impoundment area. Furthermore, it would permit the expanded NC54 highway and the new railway section to be combined in one transportation corridor rather than adding, in an environmentally sensitive area, another corridor with additional visual, auditory and atmospheric pollution.

#### 5. CONCLUSION.

As you proceed with prudent and thoughtful planning of the proposed light rail system, I urge you utilize the C2 route to minimize costs and impact on the environment

and to maximize benefits for the most citizens in Chapel Hill and the region.

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From: betty white

Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2011 9:35 AM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Light Rail Train Routes

Dear Mr. Henry: My husband and I are residents of The Cedars of Chapel Hill.

We join other residents of our continuing care community in asking that the C2

route be chosen rather than the C1 route. The C1 route would separate our residences from our DuBose Health Center, a licensed 48-bed skilled nursing facility. In addition there are safety concerns for senior citizens and children going to the elementary school, The C1 route would also adversely affect the state-designated wetland area known as Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area.

We understand the C2 route would have a far smaller impact on the environment, be less expensive to build and ultimately have greater ridership. We respectfully request that the C2 route be chosen as the light rail route to be constructed.

Betty P. White and Raymond P. White, Jr.

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November 7, 2011

Dear Mr. Henry:

I am a current resident of the Meadowmont community and a member of the Cedars of Chapel Hill. I am 100 % in favor of a light rail system but I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE C1 ROUTE. It is my understanding the C1 Route would cut through the Cedars of Chapel Hill which would separate the 48-ed DuBose Health Center from the rest of the facility.

In addition, C1 WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE WETLANDS , be more expensive than the C2 proposal and more than likely have less ridership potential. THE C2 PROPOSAL, IN MY OPINION, IS A NO-BRAINER. The C2 proposal eliminates or greatly reduces my concerns.

Sincerely,

William E. Nolta

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From: carma burton

Sent: Friday, November 04, 2011 5:22 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject: light rail

We have over 400 elderly residents living here at The Cedars. Most of us have fairly regular appointments at the DuBose Center for check-ups, physical therapy, lab work and other needs. Many of us have been there for varying lengths of time after a hospitalization for hip replacements etc. One of the joys of life here is that we don't have to drive there. It is a pleasant healthy walk for those going for routine care. For those who have loved ones there, some permanently, they walk over every day.. We have 48 beds there. Many patients convalescing like to be wheeled or walk as able out to the porches to enjoy the fresh air and quiet beauty of our neighborhood.. This light rail plan C1 shows a callous disregard for this concentration of vulnerable citizens., and for the many cars and children headed to Rashkis Elementary School...

Noone disputes the wisdom of trying to implement light rail to handle ever-increasing traffic. However, I beg you to reconsider any bias you may have in favor of C1. It will be destructive to the entire village...to our property and to our lives.

Sincerely, Carma Burton

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**From:** Claude Snow

**Sent:** Friday, December 30, 2011 2:07 PM

**To:** [mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org); Henry, Andrew; [meadowmont@nc.rr.com](mailto:meadowmont@nc.rr.com); [hankrodenburg@yahoo.com](mailto:hankrodenburg@yahoo.com)

**Subject:** Comments and support for C2 Light Rail Transit (LRT) route, UNC Hospital to Duke Hospital

Dear Sirs:

I will not be able to make the January 9, 2012 Chapel Hill Town Hall meeting to express my opinion regarding the two alternative LRT routes between UNC Hospital and Duke Hospital. Please accept this email as my input.

**It is my opinion that the C2 route on the South side of Highway 54 to a Hillmont station near Barbee Chapel Road is a much superior route to the C1 route.** I

understand and support many of the current arguments for the C2 route; including less expensive than C1, less of an environmental impact, less of an impact to the Little Creek lands and slopes, and no parking associated with C1.

In addition, I would like to add my input having witnessed the growth of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) for 20 years from its inception of rapid rail in 1979 through 1999. Several of my personal friends were board members of the Atlanta Regional Commission and board members of MARTA during this period. Through their eyes in discussion with them and from first-hand, regular transit experience, I would like to add my insights as I think they will / can apply to the inception of rapid transit in Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill in a few years.

MARTA experience, 1979 - 1999:

- **Stations have good usage because there is a reason to go there ... work; shopping; recreation.** The most utilized MARTA stations were at major shopping centers/malls; athletic venues; and major business/office clusters where the station to the office/venue was a ten minute walk or less. There were some stations established near population centers on the rail lines between the major activity stations to make the use of rapid transit more convenient. The only stations that were successful outside of major destination venues had parking. Those stations without parking were and remain the least used facilities.
- **Convenient parking at the station is essential.** Plenty of close-by parking made stations well-utilized. Business people got use to park-and-ride if it was easy to park. Otherwise, most people just kept to driving to work ... especially if one did not have a regular work shift.
- **A station without parking puts a burden on nearby businesses.** Just as merchants near the UNC campus must continually monitor their parking lots and tow people who are not shopping, so it is / will be where rapid rail stations exist without parking. I sense this will be a significant negative to a Meadowmont station as proposed in the C1 alternative - especially for the nearby Harris-Teeter, banks, and local Meadowmont merchants.
- **People use rapid rail because it is a quicker and easier option than driving; less expensive is important only for long-term situations.** People primarily liked using rapid rail because it was convenient, timely, and you did not have to fight commuter traffic. Most people are willing to pay for convenience and so will continue to pick driving over rapid rail even though it is more expensive. Rapid rail was often used to/from the airport where it offset the availability and cost of over night parking. By the way, the rapid rail needs to go right to the terminal; not require a transfer to a bus or other vehicle to get to the terminal. Otherwise, people will not use it ... lack of convenience.
- **Most people will only walk about 2 to 4 blocks; less than a quarter mile.** People are generally lazy. They will go to a gym to stay fit, but will rarely walk a distance greater than can be covered in ten minutes when in business or social attire. If a station does not have parking, then the vast majority of potential users live within no more than a quarter mile radius - about a ten minute walk.
- **Increased security is important - both on the trains and at the stations.** Much like a shopping mall, rapid rail allows people of different backgrounds to congregate freely and, as such, provides focal points for persons who wish to rob,



steal, cheat, harrass, or otherwise cause a disturbance. Just as there is security at Southpoint Mall continually monitoring the site internally and externally, so there needs to be continual monitoring and police activity to insure rapid rail safety. You kill ridership quickly if people think it is not safe or if they are going to be harrassed while traveling. MARTA quickly established its own police force to ensure safety. I hope these experiences and insights have been helpful. I encourage you to consult MARTA or another rapid rail regional system to learn of their growing pains and what changes they would make if they could re-design from inception.

Thank you for listening and considering my input.

Claude Snow

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From: Leah Boucher  
Sent: Thursday, December 29, 2011 9:43 PM  
To: [mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org); Henry, Andrew  
Cc: Meadowmont Community Association Manager  
Subject: Light Rail Transit

Dear Town Council and the TAC,

I write regarding the two proposed routes under consideration for the Light Rail Transit connecting UNC Hospital to Duke Hospital.

As a native of Chapel Hill, a resident of Meadowmont, and an ardent environmentalist, I write to voice my strong hope that you will select the "C2" route that continues on the South side of Hwy 54 to a Hillmont Station near Barbee Chapel road and go from there.

This route would help preserve land that has been designated a Significant Natural Heritage Area. With so much development (Meadowmont included) in the Triangle over the past 34 years that I have lived here, I cannot but hope we can preserve some of the beauty and natural habitat we still have. I love pointing out deer and foxes (yes we have grey ones), and raccoons to my children. This is my primary reason for urging C2.

Secondly, I would like to preserve the close knit community that Meadowmont does afford. While I appreciate the connectivity that the LRT will provide, it does seem to be less disruptive and more convenient for more people if it continues on the South side of HWY 54.

Lastly, my understanding is that the C2 alternative is much more cost effective (to the tune of many millions.) As a tax payer, I support a more efficient alternative - especially in these days where we watch the tax dollars to schools erode.

Thanks for taking the time to hear my opinion.

Have a wonderful New Year.

Best,

Leah Boucher

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**From:** Susan Zaranek

**Sent:** Sunday, January 01, 2012 4:16 PM

**To:** [mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org); Henry, Andrew

**Cc:** Mike Zaranek; Meadowmont Community Association

**Subject:** Light Rail Transit C1 and C2 Options

Dear Council Members and Transport Advisory Committee Members,

I have been following the discussions relating to the Light Rail Transport planning that would connect UNC Hospital and Duke Hospital. I know that many opinions have been expressed so far and I would like to add mine to your considerations, specifically related to the C1 and C2 options.

The C2 option will have less environmental impact and will cost less. That's certainly a good start. Still, what makes it the right choice is the fact that it provides for parking at the station. That is absolutely critical if you want to truly make it a viable option for this community as it grows. I have lived in Meadowmont for seven years and watched as the bus route in the neighborhood was changed and changed again as it did not meet the needs of residents and riders. There will not be second chances with the LRT.

The LRT is a bigger idea and opportunity than the buses, and must serve a broader population than just the Meadowmont residents. So you absolutely need parking.

Meadowmont residents will still have walking access to the service but we likely won't have the urban density in this area to rely totally on foot/cycle traffic. Without parking, you are limiting access to this important new service, adding to the traffic burden on Hwy 54. In addition, the C1 option will severely impact the residents of the Cedars by making it harder for many residents to access their health center, disadvantaging people who surely need easy access to these services.

I understand the planning process to be robust and thoughtful. I would appreciate if you would consider the needs of the broader community and environment in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Zaranek

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**From:** Selby, Christopher P

**Sent:** Sunday, January 01, 2012 2:13 PM

**To:** [Commetts@dchcmpo.org](mailto:Commetts@dchcmpo.org)

**Cc:** Henry, Andrew

**Subject:** Alternatives Analysis Public Comment

January 1, 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to contribute public comment on the Alternatives Analysis which is receiving comments until Jan. 4, 2012.

I am a resident of the City of Durham, I live near the proposed light rail station in Leigh Village. Last month I voted to raise our sales taxes to pay for the transportation improvement program on the ballot. One reason I voted to provide our money for these projects is that I like the preferred route of the light rail line called C1. Ideally the governmental will not ask for money to pay for something desirable and then use it for something undesirable (C2). I would prefer to have voted at a time when the decision to use C1 was more firmly established, however, the ultimate decision was not made before the election.

A major reason that I like option C1 is that it does not put a light rail line on George King Road. I believe that George King Road should remain available to developers to use as a road link between NC54 and Leigh Village; however, the path of the C2 light rail line would make such a road link impossible. I understand that such a road link is not included in the Collector Street Plan which was devised for the area; however, it was made clear by the Collector Street Plan Management Team that the Collector Street Plan road map was not 'written in stone', rather it was a guideline and developers could conceivably vary from that guideline. Thus it is important that George King Road remain a viable option for possible future development as a collector street.

I have read much of the public comment on the alternatives C1 and C2, and clearly there is much support for C1 and many good reasons for this support. I learned something interesting from these public comments about Woodmont. Woodmont is the potential future development that would be adjacent to the path of alignment C2 and would potentially include a rail station instead of the rail station planned at Meadowmont. I learned that if Woodmont is ever developed, and alternative C1 is active, Chapel Hill will require Woodmont to provide shuttle service for their residents to access the rail station at Meadowmont. That is a great idea since most of the future residents of Woodmont probably would not care to cross NC54 and travel to the Meadowmont station on foot. In addition, there is a large tract of land which is owned by UNC and which is located between Meadowmont and the proposed Woodmont site. This land is likely to be developed by UNC

in the future. Thus there is opportunity for the Woodmont shuttle to bring commuters at both the Woodmont and the UNC sites to and from the rail station at Meadowmont, which would be a most efficient way to provide passenger service and reduce congestion in the heavily traveled NC54 corridor.

I have also read that C2 would possibly constitute less of an imposition on Corps of Engineers wetlands than C1. I regularly walk in the area of routes C1 and C2 and I am skeptical regarding this point. Route C2 would entail a considerable amount of bridge structure elevated over water, while it appears C1 would cross a relatively narrow stream. Also, I have seen in the recent Alternatives Analysis document a note at the bottom of Table 13.3 that states that route C2 avoids "having a new crossing and disturbance to the contiguous Little Creek watershed north of NC54". This statement is not entirely correct. Southwest Durham Drive will constitute a crossing of the Little Creek watershed north of NC54 close to where the light rail line is proposed to cross. The plan for the road I believe came before the plan for the rail line so in this respect, the rail crossing is not new. Ultimately, in the future, the Little Creek watershed north of NC54 will not be contiguous no matter what happens with the rail line. This information is available on the relevant Collector Street Plan Map.

I also question the justification in making the 'imposition of the wetlands' a factor in deciding route C1 or C2. The same issue came up in the Collector Street Plan when George King Road was considered as a potential Collector Street. George King Road as a collector was highly popular among residents in the community. However the planning staff would not seriously consider this route because it ran through Corps of Engineers Land. It was asserted that paving it would be a serious problem. However, a call to the State DOT revealed that the State already plans to pave George King road at no cost to developers, and obtaining permits is not expected to cause a serious delay. Part of the permitting will involve making arrangements for mitigating any impact to the Corps lands. Mitigation is a standard procedure and I presume mitigation will be done whether either C1 or C2 is built. Thus, in either case, as a result of mitigation, there should be no net negative impact to wetlands in the area. While it is tangential, I believe it is worth noting for the sake of perspective that the Corps of Engineers wetlands in question was in fact created to mitigate the effects of creating Jordan Lake. The man-made swamp is relatively new from an ecological perspective.

I also read that C1 would be more expensive than C2. The estimated difference is negligible compared to the overall cost of the transit projects that we approved in the last election. Also, in time, the cost estimates undoubtedly will vary. Actual costs that will be incurred in the future in the Woodmont area are likely to go up if that area is in fact developed. Look at the various developments that Chapel Hill has approved in recent years. It is quite possible

if not likely that if Woodmont is developed, obstruction to light rail, with associated increases in costs, will arise even if a light rail station is included in the development plan.

I read that the adverse environmental impacts and costs would be reduced with route C2 because the routing of C2 alongside NC54 through wetlands would reduce the overall footprint and economies of scale could be achieved. While this makes sense intuitively, the same argument about reducing the footprint and economies of scale could be made about the routing of the C1 path alongside Southwest Durham Drive through the wetlands.

I also believe that Meadowmont constitutes an excellent location for a rail station as a destination for those living elsewhere. It has many places to go to, including the UNC Wellness Center, the UNC Healthcare facilities, grocery shopping and other shopping and wellness locations, a bank, a liquor store, a place to ship packages, and lots of restaurants and other businesses. These are all located on either side of the rail station within easy walking distance to the proposed rail station. There are open spaces and space near the proposed rail station to add parking. Indeed, it appears as if Meadowmont was designed to have a rail station at the proposed location. Regarding Meadowmont residents, I suspect that the recent Alternatives Analysis report is correct in that ridership estimates for Meadowmont residents are probably low and will be higher when residents realize that with their existing, excellent pedestrian infrastructure, it is easy to access light rail.

In contrast, the alternative to the rail station at Meadowmont is a station at Woodmont. Woodmont currently is a concept. The rail station would be on the edge of this concept, alongside the noisy, fuming, pedestrian-unfriendly NC54. I am not confident that Chapel Hill can and will follow through and turn this concept into a transit hub that is more pleasant, useful and provides more light rail users than Meadowmont. Regarding the option of a rail station at Meadowmont vs Woodmont, I feel as though a bird in the hand is better than two in the bush. It is a no-brainer, go with the great location/destination, Meadowmont.

Along with the question of Chapel Hill being able and willing to function in a light rail-friendly manner, and the notion that you get what you vote for, there is another intangible that is relevant. The NC54 corridor, which extends from I-40 to 15-501, functions as a major entrance to Chapel Hill. How does this corridor function esoterically? This is not a trivial consideration. Please note that Chapel Hill is expending considerable effort and finances to provide public art where the 15-501 corridor enters Chapel Hill.

Regarding the entrance to Chapel Hill via the NC54 corridor, I think that first and foremost people think of the NC54 corridor as a failure in its principal transportation function during rush hour when commuters experience congestion. Otherwise, it retains, with exceptions

such as the East 54 development, a somewhat pleasant, bucolic atmosphere as seen from inside a car. The more recent developments have included effective landscaping buffers alongside NC54, and the wetlands is undeveloped. Older residential and retail locations are largely set back from the highway such that while they may be visible, there is a sense of space so that it does not feel crowded. The C2 rail line would include a bridge over the highway right at the edge of the wetlands, and would run alongside the highway on a bridge structure as it passes through the wetlands. This highly visible infrastructure would be located where traffic backs up during the evening rush hour. I believe it would confer the sense of being in an infrastructure jungle of asphalt, rails and power lines. Alternatively, the C1 rail line would include a bridge across NC54 which would be located beside an intersection (at Meadowmont Lane) where 6 lanes of traffic cross 9 lanes, and at this location the added infrastructure would not be in such stark contrast to the local environment as it would be in the wetlands. In the wetlands, the C1 line would skim the treetops rather than run beside and then over traffic congestion. The C1 rail line would, I believe, provide a more enjoyable journey than C2 for auto and rail passengers alike and would reduce the likelihood of rage among travelers.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Chris Selby

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Greetings and I hope you're well.

By now, I'm sure you're aware of the light rail proposals currently being reviewed for the future, and I wanted to share an Orange County citizen's view on the plan of record, C1, in addition to the current alternative, C2. Many of us have watch this process very closely, especially because of C1's implications for the community and the environment.

Fortunately, due to the concerns of residents of both Durham and Orange County, Durham and Chapel Hill, a fair-minded and far less invasive plan has been created, C2, which would greatly mitigate and avoid the extensive and permanent damage to wildlife, the terrain, not to mention the continued viability of the Little Creek reserve that would be diametrically affected by C1. C1 would drastically alter the pristine area in question, one of the last to be found in Durham or Chapel Hill, and its very construction would also project far greater damage to the area.

There are many who support the C2 alternative-and for the record-groups and institutions like UNC Health Care and Hospital, the greater Meadowmont Community Association, protectors and advocates of the environment like North Carolina Heritage Foundation and

ordinary folks like myself and many others in Durham, Orange and Chapel Hill.

There are those who say that Meadowmont was slated for and planned for such a light rail system, C1; and, many would say that Meadowmont was not and is not the high-congestion community, high-density space often spoken of. The vast majority of residents in the community will not live within a comfortable walking distance from the rail and would therefore likely drive to a station, for which C1 does not dedicate parking for, already an issue in Meadowmont. C2, on the other hand, would have dedicated parking, dedicated and planned, high-density living space to create maximum impact and ridership. That's one reason C2 maintains higher planned ridership, at a lower projected overall cost. It's really a win-win when comparing costs, ridership, and, most importantly, environmental impact.

However, what's ultimately important to all of us is the environmental impact of C1, a central point that supporters of C1 seemingly overlook, much to the potential detriment of the community's most precious resource. At the end of the day, it's what C1 does-and C2 doesn't do- that makes a significant difference. With the plans in the works for Hwy 54 and the surrounding area, not to mention the potential negative impact of C1, we are hoping that you and your committee will ultimately support C2 as the plan of choice for all of us.

I hope-we hope-that you will work with your committee/council members, etc. in supporting the better plan, C2, for the sake of the community, for the sake of the environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration and all your hard work making our community a great place to live.

Regards,

Geoffrey Daniel Geist

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From: Dawn Paffenroth  
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 1:48 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Alston Ave/NCCU Commuter Rail Station  
Andrew:

I am sending my comments to you because the 'comments@dchcmo.org' address kept dumping me out!

I definitely support the need for an Alston Ave/NCCU commuter rail station. East Durham does

have a huge percentage of transit dependent, low income and minority populations relative to the overall project corridor. And, as also stated in your Report Addendum, this station would connect residents of East Durham and Northeast Central Durham to the region's employment, institutions, shopping and entertainment. Expanded access to Durham Technical Community College and NCCU is definitely needed.

I also support including this commuter rail station in the Durham-Wake Commuter Rail Project so that user benefits are not delayed six or more years until the Durham-Orange LRT Project (where it is currently included) is implemented. The sooner we can bring this needed service to East Durham and Northeast Central Durham the better for the economic development of those areas!!

Dawn L Paffenroth  
919-471-9911  
East Durham

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Sent: Sunday, December 18, 2011 12:58 PM  
To: EReckhow@aol.com  
Subject: Light Rail Transit

Dear Commissioner Reckhow,  
As a resident of The Cedars in the Meadowmont community, I am very interested in the route the light rail system will take. Aside from the fact that C1 would adversely affect the quality of life in this retirement community, it would have a devastating impact on the environment. C2, for so many reasons - environmental sensitivity, lower cost to build, potential for greater ridership - is the logical choice.  
I hope you will take this into consideration when making your decision.  
Sincerely,

Ina Evans

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From: Lois Hirschman  
Sent: Saturday, December 17, 2011 11:45 AM  
To: lydia@lydialavelle.com; EReckhow@aol.com  
Subject: light rail

The light rail proposal C1 would seriously impact the native habitat of many animals. This, in turn, will effect the ecological balance of this area which in turn will effect those of us who live here in Chapel Hill and Durham. We have done so much already to harm this balance it seems very unwise to continue the decimation of the fragile habitats left. In addition the area at the back of the Cedar Hill property would seem to need so much



additional structure because of the steep hill that it seems that the it would be considerably more costly. If by giving us these two choices, you purposely gave us this untenable C1 in order to give us a choice of one that really was much better and the choice was made very simple. I congratulate you on your "smart plan". I hope this was your reason for adding C1 to C2 and at least getting input from the community.

Sincerely Lois R.

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From: Matthew Barton  
Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 6:02 PM  
To: Comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: comments on transit plans

Dear Sir,

I am surprised that there is no plan to allow direct rail service from Chapel Hill to RDU. This would be a major convenience for my family, and thousands of students/faculty. I am sure you are aware of the elaborate plans UNC has for the Carolina North development over the next 50 years, including a lot of high-tech business, which would benefit from this kind of link. So please put that in.

-- Regards,

Matthew Barton

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From: sheila tayrose  
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 8:22 AM  
To: Comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: rail

In my opinion, there is no functional mass transit in the triangle. I live off of Hope Valley Rd. There is no bus available. If I want to go to Chapel Hill, I need to use a car. I would love to see light rail, as well as mini-buses that would run throughout the day on high use roads. Durham is a town that is NOT pedestrian or bike friendly. There are a lack of sidewalks and bike lanes. I am dependent on a car to shop, work, and get to places within Durham or to go to Chapel Hill.

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Sent: Saturday, December 17, 2011 5:47 PM  
To: lydia@lydialavelle.com; ereckhow@aol.com  
Subject: Light transit routes

Good afternoon,

With a background in natural science I am well aware of the negative environmental impact of proposed route C1. This is but one of a number of reasons for favoring the alternative route C2.

Arthur Clark  
(Member of the Meadowmont community)

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Thank you again for this opportunity to address a matter of important community concern, namely C1 and its implication for our natural heritage in the area.

The core argument in support of C2 over C1 is that C1 does unnecessary and significant damage to our community's irreplaceable precious resource: the Little Creek Natural Heritage site. C1 would punch two permanent rail lines with overhead catenary wiring through the undisturbed Little Creek Wetlands, and produce years worth of construction mayhem with massive amounts of earth-moving equipment imposed upon a pristine and unspoiled natural area designated by Durham County as an important "inventoried environmental area."

UNC, who owns significant property in the disputed C1 transit routing area on the West side of Little Creek Basin, has recently made the important decision to move their entire Business School expansion - hotel, cafeteria, classrooms, conference center out of the DENR slopes area to avoid environmental impacts to the bottom land area adjacent to the CORPS land. This is a move with far-reaching implication for the area. As a result, there now exist no plans for any stakeholder on this property west of Little Creek, that C1 proposes to invade, to upset and violate this pristine natural heritage area.

C2 keeps this important habitat whole by instead going down Hwy 54 and therefore would allow an important environmental preservation plan to succeed

Many of us at the end of the day, no matter where we are from, Durham or Chapel Hill, want to hop on the light rail and travel to either the UNC hospital or downtown Durham and the city's universities.

The C2 option helps to facilitate this transportation model without doing significant ecological and environmental damage. It would traverse the Little Creek corps land to the already developed Hwy 54 corridor, and would completely avoid the DENR natural heritage area.

I sincerely request that we all be responsive and supportive of our irreplaceable natural assets and support C2 as the superior alternate routing plan in terms of cost, ridership, and environmental sensitivity

And finally, I hope each and every one of you can take the opportunity and go down and look at the pristine area at the Little Creek basin, then you'll realize that C2 is clearly the better choice; that sacrificing our natural heritage unnecessarily is not the fabric of our broader community values nor does it mesh with Durham's environmental mission statements.

Many thanks,

Geoffrey Daniel Geist

R. EDWARD MORRISSETT, JR.  
242 CEDAR CLUB CIRCLE  
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA 27517

November 3, 2011

Mr. Andrew Henry  
Transportation Department  
Durham, NC 27701

Re: Light Rail Transit Route

Dear Mr. Henry:

My wife, Betty, and I moved to The Cedars a little over two years ago. Thus far our experience here has exceeded our expectations. The Members are so nice and we have made many new friends. The staff here is superb both in what they do and how they go about doing it.

It is, therefore, very hard for us to come to grips with the possibility of the proposed Light Rail Transit System and how it would divide our campus and make it much more difficult to get to the DuBose Health Center which is a very important part of the overall health care system here and which will grow in importance to Betty and me as we grow older and most likely gradually become more infirm.

When the original right of way was put in place, The Cedars did not exist. We do exist now and are fully built out. It seems to us to be a real shame to put this divisive rail line through our campus when you don't have to. As we understand it, the proposed C1 route is both more expensive to build and will do more harm to the environment than will the C2 route. In addition, the C1 route will harm our property values and will be an unsightly blight on one of the major access roads into Meadowmont.

Betty and I certainly hope and pray that the more rational route know as C2 will be adopted.

Sincerely,

  
R. E. Morrisett, Jr.

Mrs. Abigail Sperber  
445 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

November 3, 2011

Mr. Andy Henry  
Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

I am a resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill and alarmed about a possible light rail train going through our property, separating our DuBose Health Center from the residences. For those of us requiring continuous health care, I cannot imagine how many of us will be able to pass across tracks of a commuter train to reach the Health Center or to visit other Cedars members who are permanently in that facility.

From all reports, the C1 alternative for a light rail will have additional damaging impact on the quality of life for all elderly residents of the Cedars who, at advanced ages, greatly depend on a peaceful and quiet living environment. The clattering of trains on tracks and loud warnings at every intersection would be seriously disruptive, especially to those patients under intensive care. During the period of construction and when it became operational, the C1 alternative would interfere with effective health care for residents of the Cedars.

The C2 plan would have the route passing along HWY 54 and George King Road avoiding the problems mentioned above. If a light rail transit system must be built, the impact of C1 on the Cedars retirement community and its 48 bed DuBose Health Center would be far greater than C2 would be for any other community.

Sincerely,

  
Abigail Sperber

IT

86 (eighty) and look forward to  
riding it to Durham, my home be-  
fore moving over here - and leaving  
my car in the garage. C'm on,  
Let's go. Use '54!

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Paula Pave

(Mrs. E. K. Pave)

F

November 2, 2011

Dear Mr. Henry,

Surely the fact that our  
tax dollars will be used to construct  
the light rail system, should we not  
deploy the least expensive route?  
along highway 54? It is already  
there! Let us save money - and  
hurry! 😊 I am already

**J Adamson**

**From:** "J Adamson" <jaja13@bellsouth.net>  
**Date:** Thursday, November 03, 2011 6:30 PM  
**Subject:** proposed light rail system in Chapel Hill  
 Dear Sirs,

As long standing members of the Cedars retirement community in Chapel Hill we are very concerned about one of the proposed routes for the light rail system from Chapel Hill to Durham. We are not against the idea of a establishment of a light rail system (something needs to be done to alleviate the heavy traffic load) we're just very concerned about where the planners have proposed to build one of the routes----- C1.

WHY instead of building the C2 route along Rt 54, skirting the adjacent wetlands and following the George King Rd to Farrington Rd. would anyone think it would be less costly, less disturbing to the neighbors, less disruptive of future pedestrian and vehicular traffic to follow the proposed C1 route. We can't understand WHY route C1 was even considered. It appears longer. It appears to involve more costly construction. It would certainly during construction as well as in the future be a significant barrier for all of us at the Cedars to access the Dubose Health Center and the businesses in Meadowmont.

Everyone at the Cedars is old! We plan to live here as long as we can. One of the reasons we are here is the comfort of having good medical facilities to assist us in our later years. The closeness of the Dubose Health center was very important to us in deciding to come to Chapel Hill to retire. Now some planners are forgetting about us and wanting to put a rail line across the entrance to the health center. What would it be like instead of a quiet peaceful bedroom to convalesce in or spend your last few days to now be waked, disturbed, perhaps even jolted as the rail road cars go cranking, dinging by---day and night-as long as it runs. WHY cut the Cedars community into two sections especially when Rt C 2 is so simple.

If we had know this was going to happen we would NEVER have come to the Cedars. I'm sure if Rt 1 is followed in time you can kiss the prominence of the Cedars goodbye. It will badly compromise us now and those who would have come her in the future. We just can't understand why such a route was ever considered except someone must have felt there would be easier access for potential riders if the route went through Meadowmont. Rt C 2 goes right by Meadowmont. We understand the folks in Meadowmont do not want Rt 1 either.

Is there any community in which a rail line has been constructed that the adjacent neighborhoods did not go into decline? it appears the planners didn't consider the social impact of their C1 route. On paper it looks more convenient for the numbers, but we, the numbers, don't want it!

There are other retirement places in this area that are quiet, peaceful and want folks like us to come. Guess we will if this Rt 1 is followed.  
 Please put the light rail line on the C 2 route.

Thank you for listening to us,

Josephine R. and Jerome E. Adamson

*Josephine R. Adamson*  
 11-5-11

*J Adamson*  
 11-5-11

**(Sample Letter)**

Your Cedars Address  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
Tel: Your Number  
Email: Your address

November XX, 2011

*212 Cedar Brookstone  
Chapel Hill, NC  
27517  
932-8198*

Dear *Mr Henry*

Information being circulated about the 2011 Sales and Use Tax Referendums has brought attention to a possible light commuter rail to run between downtown Durham and UNC Hospital.

My understanding is that there are two options being considered for where the light rail system might be constructed. Alternative C1 would pass in very close proximity to the 48 bed DuBose Center of The Cedars and then between the village of Meadowmont and other homes of The Cedars of Chapel Hill retirement community. Alternative C2 would have the route going along HWY 54 and George King Road, thereby avoiding disruption to seriously ill patients at the DuBose Health Center and the essentially quiet neighborhoods of The Cedars and Meadowmont.

As a senior resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill and also a member of the Meadowmont Community Association, I strongly support the C2 alternative for the following reasons:

1. C2 avoids a major impact on the environment by not having the route pass through the wetlands.
2. C2 is a less expensive alternative with the promise of yielding greater use by commuters.
3. C2 avoids disruption to the quality of life at The Cedars, the DuBose Health Center and Meadowmont.

Your careful consideration of this information is appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Jim A French*  
Your Name and Signature



538 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
Tel: 919.259.7789  
Email: [drorke@cochill.net](mailto:drorke@cochill.net)

November 3, 2011

Mr. Andy Henry  
Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry:

Information being circulated about the 2011 Sales and Use Tax Referendums has brought attention to a possible light commuter rail to run between downtown Durham and UNC Hospital.

My understanding is that there are two options being considered for where the light rail system might be constructed. Alternative C1 would pass through the wetlands and woods, then travel in very close proximity to the 48 bed DuBose Health Center of The Cedars and down Meadowmont Lane directly across from other homes of The Cedars of Chapel Hill retirement community. Alternative C2 would have the route going along HWY 54 from George King Road, thereby avoiding disruption to seriously ill patients at the DuBose Health Center and homes of the elderly residents of The Cedars.

As an average age 82 year old resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill and also a member of the Meadowmont Community Association, I strongly support the C2 alternative for the following reasons:

1. C2 avoids a major impact on the environment by not having the route pass through the wetlands/woods and avoiding destruction of the natural wildlife habitat.
2. C2 is a less expensive alternative with the promise of yielding greater use by commuters.
3. C2 avoids disruption to the quality of life for elderly residents of The Cedars, and especially the members in a critical stage of life at the DuBose Health Center.

Your careful consideration of this information is appreciated.

Sincerely,

  
Donald M. Rorke

November 3, 2011

Dear Mr Henry,

I am a taxpaying resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill. I am quite concerned over the C1 plan for a light rail system, because of the wetlands it will destroy, the cost and I am on a walker. To navigate over a rail bed would be dangerous if not completely impossible. The cost factor between the two, as a taxpayer, of course, is obviously in favor of C2. Today for those of us living on fixed incomes that is an extremely important consideration.

The only drawback might be having to cross 54 to get to a station. This could be handled for much less than the difference in cost of the two projects by a bridge with a slope and heavy handrails to get to it and or an elevator built into the structure.

C1 will make life at The Cedars for your older population (which is growing older and bigger ) severely hampered. We will not have a safe way to get to the Health Center. ( Some of us must visit on an almost daily basis). In addition those who are forced to spend their declining years in this fine Health facility will not have the quiet and peace they so need to have the quality of life, you would wish your parents, in the last years of their lives, when they are no longer able to function in the general community to have.

If the reason you presented two plans so dramatically different so that the citizens could have a yea and nay with the one being so wrong for so many reasons that the less interfering and less expensive one would be sure to pass I applaud you. We do need available public transit for sure. This is a sound idea but not at the expense of the natural habitats and the elderly.

Sincerely



Lois R. Hirschman

114 Cedar Breeze Ln

Chapel Hill 27517

782-7015---- hershy@cochill.net



Ms. Libby Lefkowitz  
513 Cedar Club Cir.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517-7214

November 4 2011

I oppose all legislation on Light Rail  
transportation going through Meadowmont  
Lane. Ms. Libby C. Lefkowitz



**THE CEDARS**  
OF CHAPEL HILL

100 Cedar Club Circle Chapel Hill, NC 27517

**THE CEDARS OF CHAPEL HILL**  
**CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION**  
100 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

November 5, 2011

Mr. Andy Henry  
Durham/Chapel Hill/Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

The Condominium Association Board of The Cedars of Chapel Hill asked me to contact you regarding the two alternate plans for the light rail route through Meadowmont Village. We believe that route C1 could adversely affect the peace and quiet of our community.

The C1 route will separate our residences from the DuBose Health Center, a licensed 48 bed skilled nursing facility. The extended construction time frame would have a negative impact on patients in the skilled nursing facility. That C1 route would have a long term negative impact on the 300 homes in our CCRC community.

It is our opinion, shared by many, that the C2 route would have a dramatically reduced negative impact on our community, as well as that upon the entire Meadowmont Village.

We request that favorable consideration be given to the C2 route and that it be chosen as the light rail route to be constructed.



Rodney L. James  
President

The Cedars Condominium Association  
Board of Directors

November 4, 2011

334 Cedar Club Cir  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
Tel: (919) 259-7025

Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt and Town Council  
Chapel Hill town Hall  
405 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Dear Sir;

Information being circulated about the 2011 Sales and Use Tax Referendums has brought to my attention a possible light commuter rail line to run between Duke Hospital in downtown Durham and UNC Hospital in Chapel Hill.

My understanding is that there are two options under consideration for where the light rail system might be constructed in the Western portion of Durham County. An alternative C1 would pass in very close proximity to the 48 bed DuBose Health Center of The Cedars at Chapel Hill Retirement Community and thence through the greater Meadowmont community. An alternative C2 would have the route following George King Road and HWY 54.

To have the light rail system pass so closely to the DuBose Health Center is not in the best interest of the seriously ill/infirm patients in residence. Not to mention the obvious disadvantages to separating a community of senior citizens from their onsite health care by a light rail line. One can only imagine the inherent problems of 80 and 90 year olds negotiating their way over the line in order to obtain their routine health care.

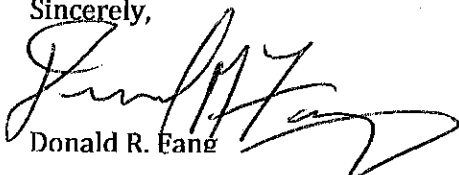
Additionally, I strongly support the C2 alternative for the following' reasons:

1. Alternative C2 avoids a major impact on the environment by not having the route pass through the wetlands to the East of the Cedars.
2. I am told that studies have shown that alternative C2 is a less expensive than other alternatives with the promise of yielding greater use by commuters.
3. Alternative C2 avoids disruption to the quality of life at The Cedars, the DuBose Health Center and Meadowmont both during the construction and operation of the system.

I am not against light rail transit as a way to ease congestion, but finding the most acceptable location for one between Durham and Chapel Hill is vital to its success. Whatever location is chosen is bound to affect a number of people. The impact of C1 on The Cedars retirement community would be significant.

Your careful consideration of my concerns is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

  
Donald R. Fanz

I have lived at The Cedars since 2002. I am alarmed at what I have been hearing about a possible light rail train going through our property, separating our DuBose Health Center from the residences. I have visions of our aging residents having to navigate across tracks of a commuter train to go to the health clinic for treatment or to visit friends there. The whole construction process would greatly hamper health care for Cedars members but especially those who are permanently in the health center.

Unlike most Continuing Care Retirement Communities, we at The Cedars pay our own property taxes to Durham County. If this rail plan should go forward, we will watch our property values drop drastically, despite the fact that this is one of the best retirement communities in the country and adds to the reputation of the Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Durham areas as excellent places to live.

From all reports, the C1 plan for a light rail will do far more damage to the surrounding wooded and wetland areas than the alternative C2 route. The Cedars bird sanctuary would probably be destroyed. I hope those who make the final decision on the route will weigh this environmental consideration carefully. Once destroyed, this irreplaceable land treasure will be lost forever.

One of the reasons I moved to The Cedars was the proximity to Meadowmont Village. The Village has had difficulties getting established and has not reached its potential as an important contributor to the economy of Chapel Hill. Those who have studied the two rail alternatives say that the C1 will not increase business in the Village. The Meadowmont Community Association Board of Directors has voted to support C2, not the C1 that would do so much damage to The Cedars.

I am not against light rail transit as a way to ease congestion, but finding the most acceptable location for one between Durham and Chapel Hill Hospitals is vital to its success. Whatever location is chosen is bound to affect a number of people, but the impact of C1 on The Cedars retirement community would be far greater than C2 would be for any other community.

*Bette Israel  
318 Cedar Berry Ln  
919-259-1957*

NOV. 6, 2011

ANDY HENRY, TRANSPORTATION DEPT.:

PLEASE DO NOT PROPOSE LIGHT  
RAIL LINE C, DIVIDE ME AND LIMIT MY  
ACCESS TO DUBOIS HEALTH CENTER AND  
THE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS IN MEADOWCROFT!  
SURELY ROUTE C2 WOULD BE LESS  
DISRUPTIVE.

SINCERELY,

*Patrick Conley*

(LEADS RESIDENT SINCE 2004!)



NOV. 2011

Camilla Rushbrooke  
131 Cedar Breeze Lane  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

919 259 7389

in the Henry.

I am a resident of The Cedars  
Chapel Hill. I arrived here  
from England & do not  
own a car.

I am therefore very dependant  
on the village of Meadowmont for  
groceries, banking, dry cleaning

A light rail route C1 would be  
unacceptable for access to  
above

I also use the DuBose Health  
Center which again would mean  
having to cross the commuter train  
tracks.

I very much enjoy the

movement surrounding the  
use of. Take regular walks  
feel the area would lose  
it with Route C1.

the own own properties +  
value would obviously  
drop with a rail line running  
through it.

I therefore oppose very  
strongly Route C1

Yours Sincerely

Caroline Rusubirooke

11/08/11

Dear Mr. Henry,

Information being circulated about the 2011 Sales and Use Tax Referendums has brought attention to a possible light commuter rail to run between downtown Durham and UNC Hospital.

My understanding is that there are two options being considered for where the light rail system might be constructed. Alternative C1 would pass in very close proximity to the 48 bed DuBose Center of The Cedars and then between the village of Meadowmont and other homes of The Cedars of Chapel Hill retirement community. Alternative C2 would have the route going along HWY 54 and George King Road, thereby avoiding disruption to seriously ill patients at the DuBose Health Center and the essentially quiet neighborhoods of The Cedars and Meadowmont.

As a senior resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill and also a member of the Meadowmont Community Association, I strongly support the C2 alternative for the following reasons:

1. C2 avoids a major impact on the environment by not having the route pass through the wetlands.
2. C2 is a less expensive alternative with the promise of yielding greater use by commuters.
3. C2 avoids disruption to the quality of life at The Cedars, the DuBose Health Center and Meadowmont.

Your careful consideration of this information is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Roubey  
626 Cedar Club Ct.  
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27519

104 Cedar Meadows Lane  
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27517  
November 7, 2011

Mr. Andy Hill  
Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, N.C. 27701

Dear Mr. Hill:

I write as the owner of a home at the Cedars of Chapel Hill in Meadowmont to comment upon proposed routes for a light-rail system between Durham and Chapel Hill.

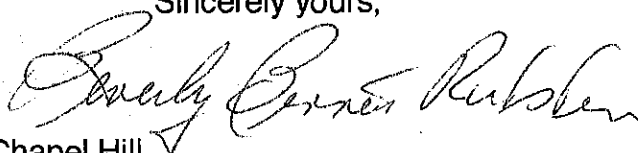
As I understand it, there are two possibilities under consideration: C-1, which would cut through Meadowmont, and C-2, which would be built on or along NC-54. Clearly, C-1 would be a disaster for our community. It would separate and isolate the Cedars from the rest of Meadowmont, notably the shopping center. It would slice through the Cedars property itself, cutting off residences from the DuBose Health Center, which is an integral part of the complex, making it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for residents to have access to the health center, where many receive routine as well as custodial care. In addition, some disabled residents, who live independently, frequently travel to the health center on motorized wheelchairs to receive therapy or rehabilitation. Having to navigate rail tracks would be an insuperable challenge for many.

There are environmental issues, as well: destruction of wetlands and a bird sanctuary, among other concerns. These are not trivial considerations in a town that prides itself on the quality of life here.

In short, I believe that adoption of option C-1 would fracture the character and cohesion of the whole Meadowmont community -- not to mention sharply diminishing property values.

The alternative, C-2, poses problems too, but they are far less severe and disruptive to existing residential neighborhoods than C-1. I urge you to discard the C-1 proposal.

Sincerely yours,



cc: Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt and Town Council, Chapel Hill

Dear Andy Henry,  
i have lived in Chapel Hill for over 26 years. In 2004, I moved into the newly opened Cedars Retirement Community. I chose it because of its DuBose Health Center and its location in Meadowmont. Now, my neighbors and I are alarmed that the safety, security and serenity of our neighborhood will be drastically altered if the C1 light rail route is chosen. Although we support light rail, we urge you to select the less disruptive C2 option. It makes sense for so many valid reasons.

Sincerely,

*Ina R. Evans*

Ina R. Evans

414 Cedar Club Circle

Chapel Hill, NC 27517

919-942-9556

[grandmatarheel@aol.com](mailto:grandmatarheel@aol.com)

*Ina Evans*

2/10/2005 10:56 AM  
C:\Program Files\Outlook Express\Outlook Express

To: Andrew Henry, Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

From: Mavis and Herbert Rothen, 534 Cedar Club Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Date: November 9, 2011

Re: Light Rail between Durham and UNC Hospitals: Route C1 vs. C2

We have been residents of Chapel Hill for five years, in The Cedars of Chapel Hill. During this time we have observed how important it is for fellow residents to have easy and fast access to the DuBose Health Center which is a part of our community. What a hardship it would be for elderly, frail individuals to be cut off from this access! The C1 route being considered would be a disaster in terms of access to this vital health link. We are tax paying citizens and voters in this community. Surely we deserve better from our governing bodies. There is a viable alternative in the C2 route, which will be less costly to construct, minimise the impact on current residents, and possibly better serve the federal government's requirement in terms of ridership.

I urge you not to vote for the C1 route in consideration of the welfare of voting and tax paying residents of The Cedars of Chapel Hill in Meadowmont.

---



THE CEDARS  
OF CHAPEL HILL

November 10, 2011

Members Council

Phil Purcell  
Council Chair

Ken Hoffman  
Council Vice Chair

Ed Morrissett  
Chair,  
Finance Committee

Joan Langenderfer  
Chair,  
Food and  
Beverage Committee

Weezie Oldenburg  
Chair,  
Buildings and  
Grounds Committee

Bill Easterling  
Chair,  
Health and  
Safety Committee

Pauline Myers  
Chair,  
Activities Committee

Bonnie Simms  
Past Chair

Hugh Boyer  
Condominium Board  
Representative

Ed Holmes  
Club Board  
Representative

Mr. Andrew Henry  
DCHC Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

On behalf of the nearly 400 residents of The Cedars, a licensed continuing care retirement community in the Meadowmont part of Chapel Hill, I am writing to express our concern over the C1 light rail route that would adversely affect our community and the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area next to our community.

The C1 route would separate our residences from our DuBose Health Center, a licensed 48-bed skilled nursing facility. The impact of major construction within feet of the Center would be a terrible experience for the Center's aged patients, most of whom are living out their lives there. If the C1 route were to be built, the noise, vibration, disruption and lights would make their remaining years extremely unpleasant. The interruption and blocking of access by trains running on 10 and 20 minute intervals would adversely affect our entire community. The safety concerns for senior citizens with walkers attempting to cross the right of way and children going to the nearby Rashkis grade school are substantial.

Experts have told us that the C1 route would forever pierce, divide and drastically alter the state-designated wetland area known as Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area. The route would destroy a dry-land buffer needed by wildlife during floods as well as adversely affect the entire ecosystem associated with the floodplain forest. Wildlife habitat would be destroyed and part of the Area deforested because construction of the route would cut



a much wider swath than the 50-foot right of way alone.

We understand the C2 route would have a far smaller impact on the environment, be less expensive to build and ultimately have greater ridership due to developing nearby communities while Meadowmont is substantially built out. We also understand that C2 is the preferred route of Chapel Hill staff, UNC and UNC Hospitals. We know that C2 would not adversely impact the patients in the DuBose Health Center, the children going to grade school or our neighbors in the Meadowmont Community.

We respectfully request that the C2 route be chosen as the light rail route to be constructed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phil Purcell".

Phil Purcell  
Chair, Member Council

cc: also sent by email

11-11-11

Margaret S. Berry

I am a resident of the Cedar  
and have just become aware  
of a possible light rail system  
being considered that could pass  
between a 48 bed health center  
and already established homes  
here on the property. I beg  
you to reconsider this possibility.  
A rail such as this would  
destroy the natural beauty of this  
retirement community. Please  
reconsider. I support C2 -

Margaret S. Berry

211 Cedar Breeze Lane

Chapel Hill, NC

27517

Nov. 19, 2011

Dear Mr. Henry,

My wife and I have lived at The Cedars since it opened in 2004 and we could not ask for a more wonderful Continuing Care Retirement Community in which to spend our final days.

We are not against light rail transit as a way to ease congestion, but finding the most acceptable location for one between Durham and UNC Hospitals is very important.

In reviewing the two plans, C1 + C2, we feel the obvious choice is plan C2 because C1 would damage wetlands, is <sup>a</sup> less expensive alternative, and would yield greater use by commuters.

Of utmost importance to my wife and I is that plan C1 would pass right through the Cedars cutting <sup>off</sup> our DuBose Health Center from the rest of our community whereas plan C2 would go around both Meadowmont Village and The Cedars of Chapel Hill leaving both as they are.

Your thoughtful consideration of the above will be gratefully appreciated.

Sincerely,

Anne & Charlie Smith

Lucille Niebur  
521 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
919 259-7144

November 10, 2011

Mr. Andrew Henry  
Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Transportation Department  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

I have been a resident in the Cedars of Chapel Hill for six years. Our retirement community experiences many medical emergencies and we depend on the rapid response of ambulance and other emergency personnel. We also need direct access to the Dubose Health Center,

Please do not consider cutting off our access to vital health care and emergency response by voting for C1. Our aging and frail residents require unimpeded access to health care facilities. C1 will certainly cause delays to pedestrians, vehicles and ambulance response. Having a train go through the property every 10 minutes with accompanying noise and other disruptions, will also impose a strain on the many older retirees who need to rest during the day, unlike working people (in the C2 area) who are away during the day.

C2 is by far the better option. The Light Rail Route C2 will capture many more riders, make more money, and minimize the impact on residential development in Meadowmont, and provide us with unimpeded access to their shopping facilities and our Medical facilities.

I urge the Town Council of Chapel Hill and the representatives on the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Council **NOT** to vote for Route C1 for the health and welfare of its property tax paying residents of Chapel Hill and Meadowmont.

Sincerely,



Lucille Niebur  
521 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27517

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CEDARS OF  
CHAPEL HILL CLUB, INC.**

**WHEREAS**, The Cedars of Chapel Hill Club, Inc. is an association of more than 400 senior members who reside in a Continuing Care Retirement Community; and

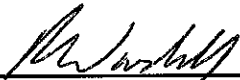
**WHEREAS**, the Board believes a light rail route that is through The Cedars and separates its DuBose Health Center from the rest of the campus would have a negative impact on the residents of The Cedars; and

**WHEREAS**, route C-1 would have a greater negative impact on surrounding woodlands, wetlands and the North Carolina Significant Natural Heritage Area to the east of The Cedars than route C-2; and

**WHEREAS**, ridership is projected to be higher and the cost lower for route C-2 versus route C-1;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Directors of The Cedars of Chapel Hill Club, Inc. strongly urges The Chapel Hill Town Council to recommend route C-2 and the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization to reject the C1 plan and to proceed as quickly as possible to settle the issue by adopting the C2 plan.

**Unanimously approved by the Board of Directors on October 18, 2011.**



---

**Robert E. Woodruff, President**

November 9, 2010

Mr. Andrew Henry,

Durham – Chapel Hill – Carrboro Metropolitan  
Planning Organization,

101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

I am very concerned about the proposed route of the light rail system through our Cedars retirement community.

During my six years of residency here, and especially after my husband's final illness, we and other neighbors were fortunate to have easy, fast and safe access to the Dubose Health Center at normal and critical times. Therefore, as you might imagine, I have become alarmed at some of the plans, and cannot fathom why my representatives on the Chapel Hill Town Council and the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization could consider cutting off our access to a vital health link for all of us in the Cedars by approving the C1 route for Light Rail to Durham.

The option Route C1 will effectively impede pedestrian, automobile and ambulance access to the Health Center for aging, frail residents of our community who are also property tax-paying citizens of both Chapel Hill and Durham County.

I present my concern about Route C1 in terms of health care issues, rather than the proverbial NIMBY attitude, and will continue to trust in the better judgement of our representatives, because there is a viable alternative in the form of Route C2. Light Rail route C2 will also minimize the impact on residential developments in Meadowmont, will continue to provide unimpeded access to the Meadowmont shopping facilities, is estimated to be less costly to construct, and expected to garner a greater ridership than C1.

I urge that the Planning Organization not approve Route C1, because of its likely adverse effect on the health and welfare of those tax paying residents of Chapel Hill who live in Meadowmont.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Libby Lefkowitz,

513 Cedar Club Cir., Chapel Hill

November 9, 2011

Mr. Andrew Henry  
Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,


I am very concerned about the proposed route of the light rail system through our Cedars retirement community. During my many years of residency in Chapel Hill, and especially after my own health problems, my family and Cedars neighbors were fortunate to have easy, fast, and safe access to the DuBose Health Center at normal and critical times. Therefore, as you might imagine, I have become alarmed at one of the plans, route C1, and cannot understand why my representatives on the Chapel Hill Town Council and the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization could consider cutting off our access to a vital health link for all of us in The Cedars by approving the C1 route for light rail between Durham and Chapel Hill.

Route C1 will effectively impede pedestrian, automobile, and ambulance access to the Health Center for aging, frail residents in our community, who are also property paying citizens of Chapel Hill and Durham County.

I present my concerns about route C1 in terms of health care issues, rather than the proverbial NIMBY attitude, and will continue to trust in the better judgment of our representatives, because there is a viable alternative in the form of route C2. Light rail route C2 will also minimize the impact on residential developments in Meadowmont, will continue to provide unimpeded access to the Meadowmont shopping facilities, is estimated to be less costly to construct, and expected to garner a greater ridership than C1.

I urge that the Town Council and the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization not approve route C1 because of its effect on the health and welfare of the property tax paying residents who live in Chapel Hill and Durham County.

Sincerely,



Catherine Holland  
543 Cedar Club Circle, Chapel Hill 27517



C. Arthur Rolander  
203 Cedar Berry Lane  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27517  
Ph: 919-259-7445  
Fx: 919-259-7446  
November 5, 2011

Andy Henry  
Transportation Dept.  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

We have been residents of Cedars of Chapel Hill for almost seven years and I have great admiration for Cedars, Meadowmont and Chapel Hill. But we are very concerned that the construction of a light rail system designated C1 would have a disastrous effect on our community. It would cut directly through our property and separate our residential areas from the DuBose Health Center, come uncomfortably close to cottages and cut through the historic wood and wetlands on the east side of Cedars.

We understand that an alternate route designated as C2 would avoid residential developments and the serious impact on Meadowmont and Cedars. Moreover we understand that the Route C2 would be less costly to build and have greater ridership than C1.

We urge that the Transportation Department select and recommend a light rail system route that will not seriously impact Cedars and Meadowmont and would be cost effective.

Sincerely,



Mr. and Mrs. C Arthur Rolander

To: Mr. Andrew Henry, Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organisation

From: Kani Hurow, 541 Cedar Club Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27517-7214

Date: November 5, 2011

Re: Light Rail System between Durham and UNC Hospitals: Route C1 vs. C2.

I have been a resident in The Cedars of Chapel Hill for six years and of Chapel Hill for a total of forty-one years. During my residency in this retirement community, and especially during my husband's illness, we, and of course other neighbors in The Cedars, were fortunate to have easy and fast access to the DuBose Health Center at normal and critical times. Therefore I am alarmed, and cannot fathom, why my representatives on the Town Council of Chapel Hill and the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization could consider cutting off the access to a vital health link for all of us in The Cedars by approving the C1 route for Light Rail to Durham. Route C1 will effectually impede pedestrian, automobile, and ambulance traffic to the Health Center for aging, frail residents of our community who are also property tax paying citizens of Chapel Hill and Durham County.

I preface my concern about route C1 with health care issues and without the proverbial NIMBY attitude, and continue to trust in the better judgment of our representatives, because there is a viable alternative with route C2. The Light Rail route C2 will also minimize the impact on residential developments in Meadowmont, will continue to provide unimpeded access to the Meadowmont shopping facilities, is estimated to be less costly to construct, and to garner greater ridership than C1.

I urge the Town Council of Chapel Hill and the representatives on the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization NOT to vote for route C1 for the health and welfare of its property tax paying residents of Chapel Hill in Meadowmont.

*Kani (Gerda G.) Hurow*

Andrew Henry  
Transportation Dept.  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

November 7, 2011

Dear Mr. Henry,

Please give careful consideration to the future decision on the route of the possible light rail commuter rail that may be built.

**I am strongly in favor of the C2 alternative.** My husband and I moved to the Cedars of Chapel Hill for medical reasons. Having the Cedars Health Center being divided from the rest of the community would be a hardship. The disruption to the Cedars and the Meadowmont community would be devastating.

From an environmental standpoint, the C2 alternative is a no-brainer. The wetlands are too important to be ruined when it is not necessary.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lynda Nolta  
432 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
919 259-7432  
Lwnolta@cochill.net

November 7, 2011

Chapel Hill Town Council  
Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt and Town Council  
Chapel Hill Town Hall  
405 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Mr. Andy Henry  
Transportation Dept.  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Re: Light Rail Route

Dear Officials:

As a resident of The Cedars of Chapel Hill I am writing to urge you not to consider the selection of Route C1 which appears to dissect our retirement community and Meadowmont. The C2 alternative would cause much less disruption to the residential areas involved by following already established transportation facilities. It would also have the additional benefits of avoiding damage to wetlands and access to the shopping area.

When we chose to move here from Fearington in 2004 our decision was based upon the comparative merits of several other retirement communities. We selected The Cedars for the many features which are evident when one looks at the site. To have a railroad running through the property would ruin what for us is a delightful place to spend our final years.

I hope you will give this appeal your wholehearted consideration.

Very truly yours,



Robert C. Paterson  
239 Cedar Club Circle  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
(919) 259-7060

November 9, 2010

Mr. Andrew Henry,

Durham - Chapel Hill - Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization,

101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

I am very concerned about the proposed route of the light rail system through our Cedars retirement community.

During my years of residency here, and especially after my husband's final illness, we and other neighbors were fortunate to have easy, fast and safe access to the Dubose Health Center at normal and critical times. Therefore, as you might imagine, I have become alarmed at some of the plans, and cannot fathom why my representatives on the Chapel Hill Town Council and the Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization could consider cutting off our access to a vital health link for all of us in the Cedars by approving the C1 route for Light Rail to Durham.

The option Route C1 will effectively impede pedestrian, automobile and ambulance access to the Health Center for aging, frail residents of our community who are also property tax-paying citizens of both Chapel Hill and Durham County.

I plead my case about Route C1 in terms of health care issues, rather than the proverbial NIMBY attitude, and will continue to trust in the better judgement of our representatives, because there is a viable alternative in the form of Route C2. Light Rail route C2 will also minimize the impact on residential developments in Meadowmont, will continue to provide unimpeded access to the Meadowmont shopping facilities, is estimated to be less costly to construct, and expected to garner a greater ridership than C1.

I urge that the Planning Organization not approve Route C1, because of its likely adverse effect on the health and welfare of those tax paying residents of Chapel Hill who live in Meadowmont.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Nina Mitchell,

533 Cedar Club Cir., Chapel Hill

**Paul E. Green, Jr.**  
**318 Cedar Club Circle**  
**Chapel Hill, NC 27517**

September 12, 2011

Mr. Andrew Henry  
Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Dear Mr. Henry,

I was born and raised in Chapel Hill, the son and namesake of North Carolina's distinguished playwright and seeker after social justice. I have always been as proud of my home town's qualities and standards as I have been of the many wonderful ideas and people who have sprung from this very civilized soil.

Now I see the crassest kind of commercialism and town engineering shortcuts gradually and severely constraining and even strangling the quality of life here and, if it keeps its present direction, making Chapel Hill no better than any other relatively well-off exurban town that has its future goals couched in terms of sprawl and traffic density, not quality of life.

I understand that the Light Rail system is aimed at easing the present strangulation of our community by the relentless growth of auto and truck traffic. And I also understand that, depending on the fare structure you come up with, it is intended to level the economic playing field so that not everyone has to own a car, live an immovable life, and continue the environmental degradation that unrestricted "automobilitis" is giving our world.

What I don't understand is why the initial planners have chosen, in the form of Option 1, to loop this railway (for that is what it is) right through the middle of one of the best retirement communities in the South, the Cedars, where I live, a place that Chapel Hill and Durham should be and are proud of.

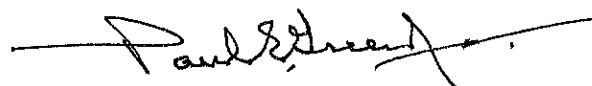
At this late time in the lives of people like me who are so dependent on prompt and efficient medical service, both in normal and emergency circumstances, placing a serious barrier in between us and our medical care is a wanton act of disregard of the health needs of, at a minimum, over 400 people like me who picked Chapel Hill and the Cedars for the outstanding attention for our bodies and souls to be found here.

Please, in the name of common sense, go for Option 2. There will be less of a negative impact all around.

I also understand that there are more serious and costly civil engineering costs for Option 1, having to do with carrying the roadbed across the swampy upper end of Jordan Lake.

Please do not let what must have been a casual choice in the early days of this project become a social and civil engineering disaster by not dealing forcefully with this problem now.

Sincerely,




MEMO

TO: Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt and the Town Council of Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill Town Hall  
405 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org

✓ Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Andy Henry  
Transportation Dept.  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701  
[andrew.henry@durhamnc.gov](mailto:andrew.henry@durhamnc.gov)

CC: President Tom Ross, UNC System  
Chancellor Holden Thorp, UNC-CH  
Dr. William Roper, Dean, UNC School of Medicine, and CEO,  
UNC Health Care  
Mr. Gary Park, CEO, UNC Hospitals  
Dr. Jan Busby-Whitehead, Director, Division of Geriatrics,  
Department of Medicine, UNC School of Medicine

FROM: William W. McLendon   
431 Cedar Berry Lane  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
[wwmcl@mindspring.com](mailto:wwmcl@mindspring.com)

DATE: November 12, 2011

SUBJECT: Support of the C2 Route for the Proposed Light Rail System  
from Chapel Hill to Durham

(NOTE: This is also sent as an email to the first two recipients noted above.)

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1. MY PERSPECTIVE: I first came to Chapel Hill as an undergraduate from 1948-52. Since 1952 Anne and I have lived in Chapel Hill for 45 of our 59 years of married life, including the past 7 years as residents of the Cedars retirement community in Meadowmont. From 1973 to 1995 I was a Professor at the UNC School of Medicine and since 1995 I have been a Professor Emeritus.

**2. I ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORT THE PROPOSED PASSENGER RAIL SYSTEMS FOR CHAPEL HILL AND THE REGION.**

I have experienced the advantages of passenger rail systems when using the rapid transit systems in New York City in the 1950s and the efficient intra- and inter-city transit systems in western Europe in the 1960s. I have witnessed the phenomenal growth in Chapel Hill and the region as a result of the evolution of the internationally acclaimed Research Triangle Park (RTP) and of the three world-class universities that include two schools of engineering, two university medical centers, a college of veterinary medicine and Nobel Laureates. The proposed light rail link between Chapel Hill and Durham, along with the commuter rail service from Durham to RTP and Raleigh, will in effect be a "Boulevard of the Universities" connecting the original and continuing anchors of North Carolina's vibrant Research Triangle area: Duke University, North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**3. I URGE YOU TO REJECT THE C1 ROUTE FOR THE PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM FROM CHAPEL HILL TO DURHAM THAT WILL TRANSECT THE MEADOWMONT AND CEDARS COMMUNITIES. (See attached map.)**

Meadowmont has been in existence for almost a decade and we can now easily see the tangible and destructive effects of the proposed C1 route for the light rail system on the well over 2,000 adults and children living in Meadowmont's 1056 homes, condo units and rental apartments (as of a July 2009 survey):

--Meadowmont was designed, and now functions as, a pedestrian and bicycle friendly community that is enjoyed daily by numerous residents and visitors. Superimposing a railway on this community would defeat this design and do irreversible damage to the community.

-- Having a light rail system crossing Meadowmont Lane (as well as the cross streets of Sprunt Street, Barbee Chapel Road and Meadowmont Village Circle) with trains running at some 10 minute intervals during rush hour will lead to major delays, traffic jams and increased danger to the following pedestrians and drivers using these roads:

- 1) many students and teachers going to and from the Rashkis Elementary School;
- 2) numerous Meadowmont residents commuting to jobs in Chapel Hill, Durham and the RTP, as well as non-residents commuting to jobs in Meadowmont Village;



- 3) elderly persons from the Cedars going to the UNC Wellness Center and to the shops and restaurants in Meadowmont Village;
- 4) those coming from the region to use the UNC Wellness Center and to obtain medical care from the UNC Heart Center and other UNC Health Care facilities at Meadowmont;
- 5) business executives coming from around the country to attend the Executive Development Programs at the Rizzo Center of the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School; and
- 6) first responders answering emergency calls from residents in the Cedars and in Meadowmont.

-- The proposed light railway would split the Cedars retirement community. It would run some 30 feet from the front of the DuBose Health Center, which today has 48 beds and by the time the rail is built is expected to have 60 to 70 or more beds to serve the over 400 members in the Cedars community. This superb medical facility provides skilled nursing care, under the medical supervision of the UNC Geriatrics Division, for those Cedars members recovering from major surgery, illnesses or injuries, as well as long term care for those with memory impairment or other chronic conditions. Construction and operation of an adjacent rail system would have a major detrimental effect on these patients. In addition, many Cedars members daily go to the DuBose Center to visit friends and neighbors or to receive their primary medical care in the 5-day-a-week clinic staffed by physicians and a nurse practitioner from UNC Geriatrics. If C1 is approved and implemented these members would have the challenge of crossing a busy and dangerous railway to make these visits.

-- The environmental impact of running a railway through the Significant Natural Heritage Area known as the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes with its irreplaceable trees and wildlife is a major disadvantage of the proposed C1 route.

#### **4. I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE C2 ROUTE FOR THE PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM FROM CHAPEL HILL TO DURHAM.**

The alternative route C2 will utilize the unpaved George King Road and the center of the Raleigh Road/NC 54 section that is soon to be expanded to 6 lanes. The latter section could be similar to the elevated rapid transit system from ORD airport to the Loop in Chicago.

--Cost. The C1 Meadowmont route will result in additional major costs to bridge the wilderness areas and to cross the highly developed and densely populated areas of Meadowmont Village, whereas the C2 route will go down an

## Support for C2 Light Rail Route

unpaved road in an area with sparse population density and then proceed down a highway right of way that is soon to be expanded to six lanes. Selecting the C2 route now would allow the inclusion of this route in the planning for the expansion of the Raleigh Road and for the eventual upgrading of the George King Road, so that the planning costs and disruptions could be minimized for both future projects.

-- Environmental impact. Route C2 eliminates the necessity to have elevated tracks over the unique waterfowl impoundment area. Furthermore, it would permit the expanded NC54 highway and the new railway section to be combined in one transportation corridor rather than adding, in an environmentally sensitive area, another corridor with additional visual, auditory and atmospheric pollution.

### 5. CONCLUSION.

As you proceed with prudent and thoughtful planning of the proposed light rail system, I urge you utilize the C2 route to minimize costs and impact on the environment and to maximize benefits for the most citizens in Chapel Hill and the region.

ENCLOSURE: Light rail alignment map

December 15, 2011

CIN: 110185

Mr. Dee Freeman, Secretary,  
N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources,  
1601 Mail Service Center,  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1601

Subject: Correspondence from Ms. Linda Pearsall, Director,  
DENR Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs

Dear Secretary Freeman:

The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance regarding correspondence containing misleading information which has been sent to the public and the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) under the signature of Ms. Linda Pearsall, Director, Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs.

These letters have implied that the DCHC MPO should not make a decision regarding the advancement of a proposed LRT project between Chapel Hill and East Durham until a more detailed evaluation of the environmental impacts are undertaken. This opinion does not accurately reflect the nature of the federally prescribed process currently underway, the purpose of which is to *identify a project for further study* in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). While the environmental significance and sensitive nature of the Little Creek and New Hope Creek corridors is unquestionable, Triangle Transit has and will continue to follow the federal process which has been established to safeguard environmental resources and avoid, minimize and mitigate environmental impacts.

At the request of the DCHC MPO and Capital Area MPO, Triangle Transit prepared Alternatives Analyses (AAs) for corridors identified in the 2035 Joint DCHC CAMPO Long Range Transportation Plans for proposed major transit investments. AAs are the first of many phases in the iterative Federal Project Planning and Development Process that transit projects must undergo if they are seeking public funding. Through the AA process a corridor between Chapel Hill and East Durham (the Durham/Orange corridor) was evaluated in order to identify the most appropriate initial transit investment or Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that would be advanced for detailed evaluation in accordance with NEPA. AAs were also performed on corridors between West Durham and East Garner (Durham/Wake) and Cary Parkway and Triangle Town Center (Wake).

The purpose of the AA is to identify the project termini, alignment, technology and general station locations of a proposed project that would undergo detailed evaluation in accordance with the NEPA *before* it could be advanced into the final design phase. However, before the NEPA process (Scoping) can begin, the MPO must adopt the project as a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

Secretary Dee Freeman  
December 15, 2011  
Page two of three

Unfortunately the term Locally Preferred Alternative is also used to identify the project that is defined after completion of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For roadway projects in the State of North Carolina, this is called the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative, or LEDPA. We are a long way from achieving the LEDPA equivalent in this transit project planning and development process. In comparison to a roadway project, we are nearing the end of what would be comparable to a feasibility study.

In early November 2011, Ms. Juanita Shearer-Swink, a member of our staff received a call from Ms. Melba McGee, Environmental Coordinator in the Legislative and Intergovernmental section of DENR, regarding the AA process. On November 8<sup>th</sup>, as a follow-up to their telephone conversation, Triangle Transit sent Ms. McGee an explanation of the AA process, links to documents on the [www.ourtransitfuture.com](http://www.ourtransitfuture.com) web site, other information clarifying the nature of further study after adoption of the LPA, and the offer of further assistance. To date, we have not received any inquiries from DENR regarding the concerns raised in Ms. Pearsall's letters.

In mid-November we received a copy of a letter which was sent to Mr. John Wilson, by Ms. Pearsall. While the letter acknowledges that DENR expects to participate in the NEPA review, it also states that the information in the AA report is misleading to both the public and local governments because it does not provide a sufficient level of detailed evaluation that would demonstrate the likely environmental impacts or the delays that may be necessary to comply with NEPA or other environmental regulations.

On December 1<sup>st</sup> we requested a meeting with Ms. Pearsall and DENR staff, and provided specific dates within December in order to ensure that the meeting would take place in advance of the final stages of the DCHC MPO decision-making process. The response from Ms. Pearsall, which was received on December 5<sup>th</sup>, indicated that none of those dates were feasible. With the assistance of Ms. McGee, January 10, 2012 was identified as the first date on which DENR staff would be available to meet with us. It is our understanding that the meeting will be attended by staff from the Division of Air Quality, NC Wildlife Resources Commission and the Office of Conservation, Planning and Community Affairs.

On December 7<sup>th</sup> we received a copy of a letter to Mr. Andy Henry, DCHC MPO from Ms. Pearsall. The letter, which indicates that DENR's comments are being provided at the request of two different citizen's groups references the inadequacy of the AA documents. It concludes with a recommendation that the concerns of other interested parties such as the US Army Corps of Engineers, NC Wildlife Commission Durham County Planning Department and several local conservation organizations should be discussed in the AA.

The AA documents issued in July 2011 identified US Army Corps owned land associated with Little Creek, and wetlands and floodplains associated with both the Little Creek and New Hope Creek stream systems. Federal law requires that alternatives to impacting wetland and streams be studied and where possible those impacts are to be avoided. Where impacts are unavoidable all efforts to minimize harm will be explored and impacts will be mitigated.



Secretary Dee Freeman  
December 15, 2011  
Page three of three

Since the Significant Natural Heritage boundaries for both Little Creek and New Hope Creek closely follow the approximate wetland boundaries, they are also addressed by the protection of wetlands under the Clean Water Act. While the AA identified that additional study in accordance with federal, state and local regulations must be undertaken in order to advance a proposed project beyond the very conceptual level reflected in the AA, Addendum 1 was issued in August 2011. This Addendum was intended to clarify any misunderstanding of the degree to which further studies of potential effects to environmental resources would be undertaken subsequent to the adoption of an LPA.

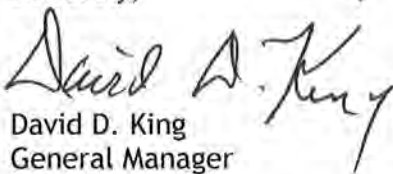
Because of their federal jurisdiction over all "Waters of the United States of America", which includes the Little Creek and New Hope Creek Corridors, Triangle Transit, its consultants, and a representatives of DCHC MPO met with the US Army Corps of Engineers (UCACE) in August 2010 and August 2011. The guidance provided by the USACE is based on their understanding of the AA process and their role as a regulatory agency throughout and beyond the NEPA process.

We find it most unfortunate that Ms. Pearsall, representing DENR, found it necessary to cast doubt on the adequacy of the AA documents and thereby the integrity of another public agency. Her actions have fostered the impression that the DCHC MPO decision-making process is flawed and pre-mature, by not taking into account environmental impacts that cannot be accurately determined until more details are developed on the actual project to be advanced through the NEPA process.

I would like to meet with you in advance of the January 10, 2012 closure of the DCHC MPO Public Comment period. We believe that the public and decision-makers should receive from DENR a more accurate representation of the level of evaluation necessary at this point in the project development and LPA adoption process, thereby enabling them to make a sufficiently informed decision regarding a project that is to be advanced through the NEPA process.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

  
David D. King  
General Manager

Copy: Wib Gulley, General Counsel  
Greg Northcutt, Director, Capital Development  
Mark Ahrendsen, Chair, DCHC MPO TCC

From: Susan Stone  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 8:02 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
Subject: We strongly prefer C2 for a light-rail line between Durham and Chapel Hill

My husband, Bill Stone, and I, Susan Stone, strongly prefer alternative C2 for a light-rail line, because it stays within the existing highway 54 corridor and does not cross the Little Creek Bottomlands. We are birders who care about preserving natural areas in the Triangle. It would be a terrible shame if plans for a light-rail line did not maximize environmental improvements. We urge you to adopt this alternative.

Regards, Susan Stone

Susan Stone

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Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 7:25 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
Subject: please choose C2 plan for light rail

Good Morning: We live at 313 Helmsdale Dr in CH and the lovely preserved land as well as our peaceful neighborhood (Oaks Villas) would be negatively impacted by the C1 plan. We think the C2 route is much less disruptive and less expensive.

We hope that you will recommend the C2 option within the existing NC 54 for corridor for economic and environment reasons.....it also seems much more practical.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carolyn and Stan Epstein

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From: Kathryn Bender  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 7:08 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
Cc: Kathryn B  
Subject: Re: Rail Transit Alternatives for Durham-Chapel Hill Route

Dear Sir or Madam,  
I am writing to give my opinion about locally preferred alternative routes for the rail segment from the Friday Center to Leigh Village.

The thought of adding a rail line - whether it is street level or elevated or both - along NC 54 is ridiculous as it is already so congested and cannot possibly handle yet another track along that route. The proposal for the line through Meadowmont has been in existence for years and there have been signs along the strip of woods at the back of the development since the beginning of the neighborhood. The land has been earmarked for this route line all along and everyone has been on notice.

Also, putting this rail line along George King Road, where there are low income people and farmers, is discriminatory and unfair.

I am in favor of public transportation and believe that we need to do a lot more to reduce the numbers of cars in the Triangle, but adding more congestion to already-clogged NC 54 is not the answer.

Thank you for sharing my views with the planners.  
Kathryn Bender

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From: Barb  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 6:43 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)  
Subject: C2 transit

vote for the C2 transit!! the best path, concerned citizen, barb

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From: Karen Lewis  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 5:43 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)  
Subject: Light rail transit routes linking Durham and Chapel Hill

To the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carborro Metropolitan Planning Organization; Please select the C2 route for the light rail linking Durham and Chapel Hill. C2 will be cheaper, it will have parking and it will be safer in a more rural setting. Construction of light rail through Meadowmont and the Cedars will endanger residents, especially members of the Cedars and the DuBose Health Center.

Thank you for your consideration.

Karen Lewis  
Chapel Hill  
Meadowmont

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From: Birnie Speltz  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 5:13 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)  
Subject: light-rail route

After reading the article in the Durham News section of the N&O, I would vote for the C2 route. My husband would also vote for the C2 route.

Birnie and Steve Speltz

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Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 5:08 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)  
Subject: C2

For many reasons C2 seems to be a better choice for the light rail. The environment, the cost, parking spaces and disruption of a local neighborhood point to the selection of C2. I hope you will vote for C2. Thanks Margaret Rook

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From: Prabha Fernandes  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 4:53 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
Subject: Rail transit

We live in Chapel Hill and moved here from Princeton. We have been used to using trains in the northeast and we are delighted that a train system is going to be put in place in Chapel Hill. It will certainly help decrease road congestion.

We are in favor of C2 transit. There is no reason to damage Little Creek Bottomlands

Thank you,

Prabha

Prabhavathi Fernandes, Ph.D.  
President and CEO  
Cempra Pharmaceuticals

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From: Mollie Neal  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 3:38 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
Subject: Railway route

C2 is a much better route for the light-rail line. It is less detrimental to a residential neighborhood, would not create traffic congestion on a street with an elementary school, and would cost less.

Mary D.Neal

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From: Grant Garrigues, M.D.  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 3:06 PM  
To: [mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org); Henry, Andrew  
Subject: Letter in support of C2 light rail proposal

Dear Chapel Hill Council and Transportation Advisory Committee,

I would love to attend the meeting tomorrow night, but I have a faculty obligation at Duke that I cannot break. Please accept my written comments below:

My wife and I have been following the discussion of the light rail proposal with interest. I applaud you on your efforts to discover the ideal pathway for the line. However, it has become abundantly clear to us that the C1 proposal is:

\*More expensive (40 million)



\*More destructive to the environment (The Little Creek Bottomlands) \*More dangerous (train tracks in close proximity to Rashkis elementary school and the Cedars health center)

Young children and the elderly crossing a potentially busy train track does not seem like a good idea.

We hope you will move forward with C2 as the sole route.

Sincerely,  
Grant Garrigues, MD

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From: sandy lee  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 2:09 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
Subject: light rail route between CH and Durham

We live at 424 Nottingham Dr, Chapel Hill, Durham Country. We favor the C2 route because it will mostly go along established roadways and spares the Little Creek bottomlands. Our trees and wild areas are being lost to development at an alarming rate. We value these areas and want to preserve all we can.

Sandra and Tom Meyer

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From: kristi  
Sent: Sun 1/8/2012 1:57 PM  
To: [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
Cc: Todd Woerner  
Subject: Choose light-rail route C2, not C1

Dear Mr. Henry,

My husband and I are users of public transit. We ride CH Transit buses within Chapel Hill, and my husband uses the Robertson Scholars bus to get to and from his job at Duke. We support increased options in public transit in the years to come.

We are strongly against the choice of route C1 for the proposed light-rail route in Southeastern Orange and Southwestern Durham counties. We believe that there are many reasons not to choose C1, but the most powerful one - for us - is its negative impact on the environment. There is no doubt that it will damage and compromise a natural heritage area.

We live on Ephesus Church Road in Chapel hill, hence it is highly likely that we will use light rail from the Friday Center or the Leigh Village development.

Thank you,  
Kristin Webb  
Todd Woerner

Kristi Webb, Psy.D.  
Licensed Psychologist

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From: Bruce Umminger  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 8:34 AM  
To: [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
Subject: I Vote C2 for Transit

I vote C2 for transit.

Thank you,

Bruce Umminger

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**From:** Jack Benjamin [<mailto:jackbenj@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 7:59 AM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
**Subject:** Train routes

To: Whom it may concern

I live in The Oaks and therefore will be impacted by the decision of the routes of the train chosen by you.

As I understand it, the first option is to go through Meadowmont, destroying much of our natural habitat. (Option C1)

I cannot imagine the difficulties in getting to and around Meadowmont with this option

I vote for option C2 - it will be less expensive, less destructive and more convenient for people to use

John T. Benjamin MD

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From: Jan Schochet  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 7:03 AM  
To: Henry, Andrew; Beckmann, Ellen  
Subject: Rail line

I am definitely in favor of option 2 that follows 54 more closely and does not go along the north side of 54, cutting through meadowmont, the cedars and the watershed area.

Isn't the value of the watershed a main reason zinn's development was denied last month?

Please know that I care about these 3 issues and that I do not live on the meadowmont side of 54. I live in falconbridge.

Thank you for this chance to comment,  
Jan Schochet

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From: Elizabeth Greenlee  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 6:45 AM

To: [Comments@dchcmpto.org](mailto:Comments@dchcmpto.org)  
Subject: Light rail transit plans

Environmentally and fiscally there is no choice other than the C2 plan. My husband and I vote for the C2 plan regarding the light rail transit route linking Durham and Chapel Hill.

Elizabeth & Bill Greenlee  
Chapel Hill

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**From:** Valerie Mason  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 10:24 PM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmpto.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpto.org)  
**Subject:** Opposed to C1 plan

Hello,

I want to express my support for the proposed C2 plan for the light rail line along Highway 54. My only concern with the C2 plan is that it might somehow make car traffic worse along Highway 54 in Chapel Hill, though I think both plans will probably contribute equally to further increasing Highway 54's traffic congestion. Despite the increase in traffic and more people probably using the Friday Center park and ride lot, I am in favor of this light rail line, and I did vote for the tax increase to help support it.

I am vehemently opposed to the amount of environmental damage the C1 plan would impose on the Little Creek bottomlands, and I will be outraged if C1 is adopted.

Thank you for your consideration,

Valerie Mason  
Durham County Resident

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**From:** Alison Kavanaugh  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 9:36 PM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmpto.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpto.org)  
**Subject:** vote for C2

I strongly favor the C2 option for the transit line due to the possible environmental impact from the alternative.

Thank you,  
Alison Kavanaugh  
Chapel Hill

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Date: 8 January 2012  
From: Morris Wallack

Subject: public input/comments requested regarding Transit Alternatives for Rail Transit including Durham and Orange Counties

Dear Mr Henry and DCH CMPO planners:

I am a Meadowmont resident whose home is within the Town of Chapel Hill limits as well as on Durham County land.

After reviewing the most recent alternatives documented for Rail Transit Alternatives, I strongly encourage you to consider and support the "C2" alternative routing as preferred.

Simply put:

- it's cheaper (materially at \$30+M less than estimated costs for C1 routing);
- less invasive to wetlands (impact area smaller),
- positioned along a higher density and less developed area that could readily be orchestrated to meet ridership demands over time, through coordinated development policies for undeveloped parcels.

Multiple discussions over the years have consistently solicited inputs from Meadowmont residents and we appreciate the realization of a viable, cheaper, more environmentally favorable alternative in C2.

Please consider this input strongly.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide comment.

Respectfully,

Morris C. Wallack

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**From:** Sridhar Iyengar

**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 1:41 PM

**To:** [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)

**Subject:** Light Rail line between Chapel Hill and Durham - We support Option C2

Andrew

We are residents of Meadowmont Village and support the Meadowmont Community Association recommendation to pick option C2 thru the Hillmont station as the responsible alternative. Our reasons are simple :

1. Lower cost of implementation
2. Lower Environmental Impact
3. Lower traffic disruption for residents and visitors (especially during school hours)

We support public transport - but prefer option C2.

Regards

Sridhar & Sumathi Iyengar  
Residents of Meadowmont

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**From:** Aggie Crews

**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 12:39 PM

**To:** Henry, Andrew; [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)

**Subject:** Locally Preferred Alternative Railway routes

Having read Sunday's Chapel Hill News article and attending a couple of the public workshops in 2011, I would like to make clear my preference for the **C2 Hillmont Station** route for the primary reasons described in the article:

1. more intuitive and practical by staying within established transportation route of HWY 54,
2. more environmentally and economically sound (avoid significantly large wetland and "Natural Heritage Area")
2. do not split the newly established community of Meadowmont,
3. avoids traffic congestion in the heart of Medicament,
4. additionally, moves future possibility of a station nearer Falconbridge, a residential as well as commercial community

Thank you for the opportunity to incorporate these comments into the decision coming up Feb 8, 2012.

Aggie Crews Architect

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**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 12:27 PM

**To:** [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)

**Subject:** Transit Vote

C2 is my vote.

Thanks Susan v. Baker

Carrboro

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**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 12:16 PM

**To:** [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)

**Subject:** Rail Route

I am a resident of Chapel Hill. Please accept this e-mail as my comment in favor of route C-2 and strongly opposed to C-1. I believe the potential environmental harm from C-1, as well as the unnecessary division of existing neighborhoods under that route, necessitate eliminating it from consideration.

Thank you.

Joe Nanney

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**From:** Justice, Michael

**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 10:56 AM

**To:** [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)

**Subject:** Comments on light rail transit routes

As a citizen likely to use and be impacted by the proposed light rail, I would add my voice of support for the C2 route. While there are probably multiple environmental and neighborhood issues that also make it the better choice, my rationale is based on the costs. The lower costs of C2 make the costs per passenger lower and funding more likely. The environment for funding of such projects is going to become significantly leaner, and I feel that the smaller investment of C2 improves our chances of getting any light rail system in the future.

Michael Justice

Chapel Hill, NC

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**From:** Mary McClure

**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 10:03 AM

**To:** [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)

**Subject:** C2

I support the C2 route for the light rail line.

Mary McClure

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**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 9:51 AM

**To:** [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)

**Subject:** Transit route choice

It seems the C2 route is better.

Carol Conway

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**From:** Hackney, Joel (Joel)

**Sent:** Saturday, January 07, 2012 6:12 PM

**To:** [mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org); Henry, Andrew

**Subject:** Light rail transit

Dear Mayor and Council,

As Chapel Hill and Meadowmont residents, we feel strongly that C2 LRT alternative is the best option for all involved. The C2 option is significantly cheaper, has less of an environmental

impact , and has the potential for larger ridership/utility to our town. I know many other residents who feel the same. We respectfully request you strongly recommend to the TAC to bring only the C2 alternative to the next phase.

Sincerely,  
Joel and Bernadett Hackney

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**From:** Kim Nowosad  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 07, 2012 1:53 PM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
**Subject:** please find an alternative to C1

To Whom it May Concern:

I live on George King Rd in Durham county and I am writing to comment on the Durham-CH-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Please find an alternative to the C1 proposal for the future light rail transit routes, or any route that cuts through Significant Natural Heritage Areas. The State gamelands, the waterfowl impoundment, and also undeveloped private lands contain some of the last refuges for wildlife. We see coyote, bobcat, fox, owl, heron, bald eagle and many other native creatures. Also, on the border of the gamelands are two gigantic loblolly pine trees (probably original growth forrest) that aught to be protected and preserved. Please protect our wetlands, many small creeks flow into Little Creek that then flows into Jordan Lake which is of course a primary source of drinking water for the surrounding area.

Thank you for your consideration

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Kim Nowosad

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**From:** LeeAnne Pendergraft  
**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 9:06 AM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
**Subject:** proposed railway routes between the Friday Center in Chapel Hill and the Leigh Village development

To whom it May Concern,

We are writing to **OPPOSE** the C2 choice as a possible route for the proposed light-rail line between Chapel Hill and Durham. Our family has lived on Barbee Chapel Rd. for 100+ years and have watched it go from a lazy dirt road to a hugely busy connector road between Hwy. 54 and Ferrington Mill Rd. or Stagecoach Rd. We have been here for the expansion of Hwy. 54 from 1 lane to 8 lanes. We live in the closest house to Hwy. 54 and know first hand how congested our

54 intersection already is. When we leave for work in the morning, we cannot even get out of our driveway until someone lets us out. We cannot even imagine having one more obstacle at this intersection.

On the other hand, the residents of Meadowmont purchased their properties knowing full well that a light-rail transit line was being planned and that it would run through their development. It makes much more sense to have a railway line nearer shopping and restaurants than an already overrun residential neighborhood with an already way too busy intersection. Please stick to the original plan to route the railway system through Meadowmont!

Sincerely,  
LeeAnne and Sandy Pendergraft

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**From:** Sandy McManus  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 08, 2012 11:58 AM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmppo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmppo.org)  
**Subject:** railway routes

To the Committee on the Railway proposal:

The amount of information provided in the paper is quite inadequate. Three days to respond is also quite inadequate. As in other areas that we are very familiar with – regional transit authorities have their own agenda and common sense has no part in it – especially since it's someone else's money they are spending.

1. There is no market here large enough to support light rail. This is a myth perpetrated by people who have never engaged in the world of real enterprise where success and failure lives on the shoulders of those who have taken the personal risk to pursue it. If there was a true market for light rail – entrepreneurs would have been standing in line for the opportunity to engage it.
2. You just turned down a revenue positive project at Aydan Ct. ( and at great loss of investment to many) because of the environmentally sensitive location. You now propose to run tracks through the same sensitive area at enormous expense at many levels with no prospect of a return on this investment.
3. You will destroy the peace of the Meadomont community. You will destroy the peace of the Hillmont area.
4. You will alternatively destroy the new Environ Way project and the UNC golf course and natural area- again at great cost and with no prospect of a return on this investment.
5. Ridership of this light rail can easily be determined by the ridership of Chapel Hill buses-- EMPTY most hours of the day. And of course- not self supporting , but totally taxpayer supported.



6. Bus routes provide service to a much larger area and would be the appropriate answer if you are so convinced you need to have more mass transit. They run on currently existing roads and would not disturb already existing neighborhoods that have been built and planned with care.

Stop government boondoggles that further destroy the financial soundness of a community, state and country. You are wrong, wrong, wrong.

Sandra McManus

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**From:** Howard Schultz

**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 9:34 AM

**To:** [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)

**Subject:** C2-YES

Please note my family's opposition to the C1 proposal that would split our Meadowmont community in half. This is not only a more expensive model, it defies any concept of critical thinking skills on the parts of the bureaucrats who came up with this idea. The C1 plan will adversely affect seniors at the Cedars and the environment.

The first question that should have been asked, even before the decision to build this, is, "do we really need it"? We cannot afford it, and I am doubtful it will be subsidized by riders, which is how it should be funded. If it means digging in the pockets of those who pay taxes again for something they are not going to use; well, how about dropping it just on that alone? Those who want to ride it can pay for it and fund it. I am already funding buses in Chapel Hill that I do not use. I hear all the time from "out-of-towners" that they are "free". They are not! The property owners of Chapel Hill pay for them whether we use the buses or not. I put this in a different category than the schools. Riders should pay for the use of these buses, and the same would go with the train.

To sum it up, keep it out of Meadowmont. Better still, drop it altogether!

*Howard*

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**From:** Susan Egnoto

**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 10:07 AM

**To:** [comments@dchcmo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmo.org)

**Subject:** Re: VOTE c2 plan for rail transit alternatives

Dear Mr Henry and DCH CMPO planners:

My home is in the Town of Chapel Hill as well as Durham County. After reviewing the most recent alternatives documented for Rail Transit Alternatives, I **strongly encourage you to consider and support the "C2" alternative routing as preferred. Supporting points:**

It's cheaper (\$30+M less than estimated costs for C1routing)

It's less invasive to wetlands

It's positioned along a higher density and less developed area that could readily be orchestrated to meet ridership demands over time, through coordinated development policies for undeveloped parcels.

Multiple discussions over the years have consistently solicited inputs from residents and we appreciate the realization of a viable, cheaper, more environmentally favorable alternative in C2. Please consider this input strongly.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide comment.

Respectfully,  
Susan Egnoto

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From: Rachel Heller

Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 10:13 AM

To: [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)

Subject: Comments re: Proposed Light Rail Route: Approve C2

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to express my strong support for the C2 route. In almost every respect, it is superior to the C1 route, despite C1 being favored by planners. I believe they have made a serious error.

C2 is the better option for environmental reasons, cost reasons (at \$30 - \$40 million cheaper) and because C1 would adversely affect the Meadowmont community without providing any parking spaces.

It is crucial to preserve the mature forest and wetlands of Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area. That is the most important reason to stop the C1 plan. Instead, we should minimize additional disruption to the environment by utilizing the existing roads as the C2 plan does.

We believe ridership will end up just as high in the long run with the C2 alternative. It is not necessary to cut through Meadowmont to achieve strong light rail ridership as orange ad Durham Co. residents will be eager to commute via light rail.

Finally, at a time of budget shortfalls and reduced public spending, it would be irresponsible to select the more-expensive option.

Please approve the C2 alternative route. Thank you.

Rachel Heller and Kevin Brown

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**From:** Michael Purcell

**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 12:31 PM

**To:** [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)

**Subject:** Support of Option C2 for the proposed light rail

To the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization:

Dear Sirs and Madams:

The purpose of this email is to express my support for the "C2" option (along existing roads N.C. 54 and George King Road) for the proposed light-rail transit between Durham and Chapel Hill. The C2 option is simply more viable due to the utilization of existing roads and dedicated parking at the proposed Woodmont station. Meadowmont Village can not accomodate the additional parking thus discouraging use of the rail. C2 would minimize the environmental impact to the Little Creek Bottomlands and Jordan Lake.

Frankly, I am opposed to any light rail effort as it is dubious that a \$180 to \$200 million rail would receive the ridership necessary to justify the expense. If there must be one, C2 is a more sensible solution.

Sincerely,

Michael Purcell

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**From:** Eric Lewis  
**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 11:39 AM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
**Subject:**

The light rail should NOT go through the Cedars and Meadowmont. It would be a more expensive route and places members of the Cedars at risk for injury and accidents. The alternative route is a much better course of action. This is particularly the case when one considers UNC has recently purchased land near the Rizzo Center that may very well be used for mixed use purposes. Having the light rail close to this property would enhance the functionality of the area.

Rick Lewis,  
Chapel Hill, NC.

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**From:** Tim Jones  
**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 2:09 PM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
**Subject:** Chapel Hill transit corridor - C2 option, please

We hope that our elected officials will select the C2 option for the Chapel Hill rail corridor. It seems to be the logical choice not only on economic grounds, but it will responsibly protect this small patch of valuable wetland. Think about it: run the rail line down beside the already developed NC 54 corridor, or cut across a pristine ecological reserve area, severing established neighborhoods in the process?

T. Jones

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Carolyn Epstein left a voicemail to state support for the C2 alternative because it has less impacts on the preserve and is more cost-effective.

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**From:** Belinda Corpening  
**Sent:** Monday, January 09, 2012 3:25 PM  
**To:** [comments@dchcmpo.org](mailto:comments@dchcmpo.org)  
**Subject:** Preference for C2

As a new resident of Chapelwood on Barbee Chapel Road, I am stating my preference for the C2 railway

route because of the need to protect the Little Creek bottomlands AND the Meadowmont community and its residents; to minimize costs, and to use the existing traffic corridors.

C2 is definitely the best preference for the preservation of the high quality of life that attracts businesses and people to Orange and Durham counties.

Thank you for this opportunity to register my opinion.

Sincerely,

Belinda Corpening

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Sent: 1/10/2012 11:09:03 A.M. Eastern Standard Time  
Subj: rail transit alternatives

This note is to add my voice to support for the C2 proposed rail route, via Highway #54 and George King Road. This route seems to have many advantages, including protection of the Little Creek Bottomlands, lower cost, and less disruption in settled, residential areas.

I live in the Cedars, in Meadowmont, and the C1 route along Meadowmont Lane, a business and residential street, and bisecting the Cedars property, appears to be ill advised and unnecessary. Meadowmont Lane is also an access street to an elementary school (Raskis).

From a personal point of view, I feel that a rail line through the Cedars property would seriously devalue this community and make it much less attractive to future residents.

Sincerely, Mrs. Jean Buckwalter

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Subject: FW: light rail options

-----Original Message-----

From: Amey Miller  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 4:08 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: light rail options

I write in support of option #C2 for the Chapel Hill light rail line. It seems to me existing neighborhoods and ecological values should be of paramount importance. It may be that there is something I do not understand about the two options. If those planners who favor #C1 have information beyond that presented in the Chapel Hill News, I hope they will come forward to the public (via the News) and inform us why that option was preferred.

Thanks for your attention to my views.

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From: Brandie Ambler Revoy  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 8:51 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Support for C2 option

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this email is to express my support for the "C2" option (along existing roads N.C. 54 and George King Road) for the proposed light-rail transit between Durham and Chapel Hill. The C2 option is simply more viable due to the utilization of existing roads and dedicated parking at the proposed Woodmont station. Meadowmont Village cannot accomodate the additional parking thus discouraging use of the rail. I am also uncomfortable with the potential safety issues arising from a light rail going through a busy neighborhood with young children and elderly residents. In addition, C2 would minimize the environmental impact to the Little Creek Bottomlands and Jordan Lake.

Sincerely,

Brandie Ambler Revoy

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From: Ken Bogue Liz Bonnet  
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 10:27 AM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Rail Line Comments

With the state of the National Economy and the North Carolina economy, I am 100% against the community spending ANY MONEY for this or any other project at this time.

I also feel that the light rail will have a negative impact on the environment and wildlife in our community.

We are at a point where the Federal Government has gone hugely over budget and until there is some balance in the financial records of both the State and Federal budgets, I believe expenditures of this type should not be allowed.

Thank you.  
Elizabeth Bonnet

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From: Emi McCall  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 9:24 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: light rail route

I am writing to express my support for the original proposed light rail route via Meadowmont community. I believe it would be unwise and unfair to the surrounding communities to move the light rail to the Hwy 54

corridor. Meadowmont was designed with the intention of having mass transit. Let's stick with the original plan and route the mass transit through Meadowmont.

Thank you for your consideration.

Emi McCall

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From: Gary Bird

Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 8:25 AM

To: comments@dchcmpo.org

Subject: Rail/Road development for Hwy54 & Meadowmont area

Dear Sir/Madam,

I strongly support plan #1 for rail/Road development in the Hwy54/Meadowmont area.

In building Meadowmont, the plan was for this area to support and be a hub for alternative transportation. This was and is a good idea and should be followed through. A connector between 15-501 and Meadowmont parkway, and other feeder roads is desperately needed. the light rail can only work if it hits these population centers. This is a model for the future, especially for Chapel Hill.

Please follow through and make this a reality.

Sincerely,

Gary Bird

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From: Geoffrey Daniel

Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 10:47 AM

To: Comments@dchcmpo.org

Cc: Henry, Andrew

Subject: Re: C2 and LRT in Durham/Orange Counties

Letter to MPO, January 11, 2012:

An important decision for our community has to be made moving forward regarding the LRT slated for Durham and Orange Counties. To date, there are two alternative on record, C1 and C2, and I hope your organization will support C2 is in the best overall option for the light rail, the community at large and the environment.

LRT is an important part of the areas' future. It will help our community to grow and grow in a sustainable and progressive fashion. Informed in the process in appointing a route for the rail should have been doing the least amount of damage to the land, appreciating the sanctity and uniqueness of the environment, especially sensitive ones. These practical criteria hones to the comprehensive plans of Durham and Orange Counties as well as Chapel Hill. In addition, important stakeholders were either

ignored or overlooked in selecting a route for the light rail, which further undermines the current plan of record, C1. Instead of seeking a less damaging alternative, C1 envisions putting an approximately 50 foot wide, two-way traffic rail line thru a Significant Natural Heritage Site, namely the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes (LCBS) area. In order to accomplish this route, the LCBS would see massive earth moving equipment essentially level the area in order to not only create a high bridge over the Little Creek but also to create an at grade rail line thru the bulk of the area. And all this without consulting, appreciating or taking into account far less invasive alternatives like the C2 route. I won't even delve into how this important site contributes to the Jordan Lake water regime, something that is part of important regional water arrangements.

The C2 route creates far less environmental impact or damage, at a lower monetary cost and higher projected ridership. C2 would also have dedicated parking at the Hillmont station near Hwy 54. Hillmont is a projected development plan centered around true high-density/congestion living and working.

Some have mentioned that C1 was designed with Meadowmont in mind. Even if this were the case-and Meadowmont is primarily a suburban community comprised mainly of homes, many of which are not within easy walking distance of the projected station at the Harris Teeter and would suggest residents driving to a station with no dedicated parking i.e., Meadowmont is not the true high-density/congested community that was envisioned like Hillmont is-it's not sufficient reason to cause significant, lasting and unnecessary damage to a Significant Natural Heritage Site. C2 offers residents in Meadowmont access to light rail via both the Hillmont and Friday Center stations both for walkers and drivers, who will have more options for parking. While cost, ridership and other factors are significant arguments to support C2 over C1, the primary argument in favor of C2 is the environmental one. It avoids significant and permanent destruction to the Significant Natural Heritage Site and would run down George King Road to Hwy 54 thereby avoiding the high-far too high-environmental cost to a unique and unspoiled site whose importance to local and regional ecology has been outlined by, amongst others, NCDENR.

At the end of the day, projects such as these should seek to do the least amount of environmental damage as possible, consult with important stakeholders and not kick the can down the proverbial road by projecting a "don't worry, what's all the fuss about...we'll get to this" via an environmental study at some juncture down the road, a development after numerous call to address impacts at a far earlier juncture in the process. This is not how trust is built within the community.

Many of us in the community, in Chapel Hill, Orange County, Durham and Durham County have a vested interested in protecting our most previous recourse, the environment. We believe that our elected officials should also uphold a belief-and practice, especially in large projects- to do the least amount of environmental damage as possible while at the same time delivering services to our community. C2 achieves just this.

C2 is a better plan than C1, and for the reasons outlined above- and for

reasons many others have enumerated- it deserves our support. This land was entrusted to us, and what we do with it and how we husband it reflects who are as a community.

Please support C2 as the plan of record for the LRT, a vote for the community, the environment, for all of us.

Kind regards,  
Geoffrey Daniel Geist

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From: Gustavo Montana, M.D.  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 3:49 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Light Rail Line C-1 vs C-2

Dear Sir,

I strongly support the plans for building the light rail line between Chapel Hill and Durham. Regarding the segment of the line between the Friday Center and the anticipated Leigh Village Development, the C-2 option should be preferred given the fact that it causes less environmental impact, does not disturb the Meadowmont development, it is less expensive and that the routing of part of the line alongside 54 takes advantage of the already developed traffic corridor. The Friday Center proposed rail station will be accessible to the Meadowmont community by the existing tunnel under NC 54 road. As for possible increased ridership with the C-1 option, this is simply an assumption. The level of ridership will depend on many factors that cannot be predicted with certainty at this time.

Gustavo S. Montana

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Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 10:20 AM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Rail Transit Routes

I do not live in Orange County I have repeatedly hiked with my Boyken Spaniel in the LittleCreek Bottomlands, and enjoyed walks on quiet summer mornings thru Meadowmont development

Strongly Favor C2 route

Jeffrey Leinicke, MD

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From: jeff revoy  
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 2:12 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Light Rail Options

To the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization:



Dear Sirs and Madams:

As a Chapel Hill resident, I have been following the proposed light-rail transit between Chapel Hill and Durham. After reviewing the material, I want to express my support for the "C2" option for the proposed light-rail transit (along existing roads N.C. 54 and George King Road).

As a resident of the area, the C2 option simply appears more viable due to the utilization of existing roads and dedicated parking at the proposed Woodmont station. Since Meadowmont Village can not accomodate the additional parking, I don't see it as a valid option for the rail. In addition, I strongly value the wet land and hiking area around Meadowmont and Chapel Hill. The C2 also seems to minimize the environmental impact to the Little Creek Bottomlands and Jordan Lake.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like additional input or comments.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Revoy

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From: John Wilson  
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 12:42 PM  
To: Lavelle Lydia; mayor@townofchapelhill.org; Bell, William; Woodard, Mike; ERackhow@aol.com; ehallman@nc.rr.com; Gordon Alice; cwatts@ncdot.gov; Clement, Howard; mark\_chilton@hotmail.com; dan-coleman@nc.rr.com; Harrison Ed; Catotti, Diane; john.sullivan@fhwa.dot.gov; mpage@durhamcountync.gov; naprol@earthlink.net  
Cc: Henry, Andrew; Pearsall Linda; Wilson Travis; Hosey Michael; Ferrell, Francis E SAW; jshearerswink@triangletransit.org; dking@triangletransit.org; gnorthcutt@triangletransit.org  
Subject: Durham-Orange alternatives analysis falls short of FTA guidelines  
Attachments: Letter to Andrew Henry\_LightRail\_20111207.pdf; ATT12747354.htm; Letter to John Wilson\_LightRail\_20111115.pdf; ATT12747355.htm; TTA LRT - LPA comment - DCHC-MPO Dec 22 2011.pdf; ATT12747356.htm

Dear DCHC-MPO Transportation Advisory Committee members:  
You have already received a great deal of comment supporting the C2 alignment and opposing C1 from the Friday Center in Chapel Hill to Leigh Village in Durham. I am confident you would have received even more C2 support from the public and local elected officials if Triangle Transit's July 2011 alternatives analysis (AA) study had included essential information about the likely environmental impacts of C1 that could and, according to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidelines, should have been obtained from state and federal resource agencies. The FTA's New Starts projects guidelines state, "The importance of a rigorous and objective AA study process cannot be understated. Alternatives analysis is the earliest, yet arguably most critical, phase of project development. The alternatives analysis study provides

the information needed by local decision makers to consider the costs and benefits of several proposed strategies to addressing corridor problems, so that they may select a single alternative to advance into implementation. Since alternatives analysis is the forum for understanding the trade-offs inherent in making such a selection, it must provide a sufficient level of technical analyses necessary to support an informed decision." [i]FTA guidelines also specify: "Because it involves specialized technical analyses and an evaluation of transportation alternatives that have varied effects on the surrounding community, the alternatives analysis is necessarily a collaborative process. The AA study typically involves local transportation planning agencies (including the metropolitan planning organization) and service providers, local governments, state and federal resource agencies, potential funding partners, and (through a formal citizen participation process) the general public." [ii]Unfortunately, during the AA process Triangle Transit did not consult multiple state agencies with known interests in the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA), through which the C1 alignment that the AA repeatedly calls "preferred" would cut for almost three-quarters of a mile. These state agencies include the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) and the N.C. Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP).

Also, no written comment is included in the AA from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which stewards the federal wildlife impoundment included in the Little Creek SNHA.

Following are written responses from Triangle Transit staff that I received on Nov. 1, 2011 to my Oct. 25 inquiries regarding input from these agencies:

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Question: Has the NC Natural Heritage Program commented on...potential impact on the Little Ck. Bottomlands and Slopes Significant Natural Heritage Area, through which is will pass?

Response: No. Input from the NC Natural Heritage Program will be solicited during the Environmental Scoping process which will bring all applicable regulatory agencies and stakeholders together to formally initiate environmental discussions. Through Scoping all parties, stakeholders and governmental agencies contribute to the range of issues that will be evaluated in the PE/NEPA process.

Question: Has USACE or NCWRC expressed an opinion re: the potential impact on the USACE's Upper Little Ck. Wildlife Impoundment?

Response: No. Triangle Transit staff, its consultants and DCHC MPO staff have met with the USACE on two occasions, however, as is typical of discussions with regulatory agencies at this very early stage of the project development process, no opinions have been expressed.

\*\*\*\*\*

After citizens including myself and others contacted these three agencies, two of them (NCNHP and USACE) issued written comments about the AA study. (See attachments.) While certainly helpful, it is unfortunate that the information contained in these comments was not made available to the public or local elected officials as part of the AA process, as FTA guidelines indicate it should have been.

If you haven't yet, I encourage you to read DENR conservation office and NCNHP director Linda Pearsall's Nov. 15 and Dec. 7, 2011 letters regarding the AA. Ms. Pearsall noted on Nov.15 that the "Environmental Impacts" section fails to even mention the presence or significance of the Little

Creek SNHA. She also points out that the AA does not mention the importance of the USACE wetlands as wildlife habitat, or that the area is managed as state game land by the NCWRC, which should raise hunting and safety concerns. Her Dec. 7 letter asked that "a more complete assessment be developed" now, incorporating concerns of the USACE, NCWRC, Durham City-County Planning Department, and local conservation organizations. Director Pearsall's request is very much in keeping with FTA guidelines re: AA studies. In his Dec. 22, 2011 letter to the DCHC-MPO TAC, Craig Shoe of the USACE wrote: "The TTA report refers to the potential for impacts to government property at Jordan Lake but provides no specific information on impacts." Shoe called the information provided in the AA "limited," and then provided detail that should have been provided in the AA itself. This includes the integral connection between the federal wetlands through which the C1 alignment would pass and Jordan Lake, the Congressionally authorized purposes of which are "flood control, water supply, water quality, recreation, and fish and wildlife conservation." Area citizens and local officials have made their environmental priorities clear through their comprehensive plans, financial investments and actions. As Linda Pearsall wrote: "Clearly, protection of these natural areas has been an important local priority, and they should be included in any assessment of the LRT." According to Elizabeth Day in the FTA's Office of Project Planning, "One of the single biggest factors that makes a project take a long time to get through our process and to get ultimately built and constructed is a lack of local consensus." [iii] I sincerely hope the TAC's expression of a Locally Preferred Alternative will reflect the local consensus that C2 is preferable to C1, even if both alignments are included in the LPA submitted for FTA approval to advance to the preliminary engineering stage. I also hope that efforts going forward to bring light rail to the Triangle will better acknowledge and accommodate local environmental priorities, and comply more closely with federal best practice guidelines for New Starts projects. Thank you for considering my comments.

John Wilson

attachments:

Linda Pearsall (DENR) letters dated 11/15/11 and 12/7/11

Craig Shoe (USACE) letter dated 12/22/11

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From: Johnson, Martin L  
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 5:01 PM  
To: comments@dchcmo.org  
Subject: Support C1 for Chapel Hill/Durham Light Rail

Dear Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization,

I'm writing my letter to express my strong support for C1, which will include a stop in the Meadowmont neighborhood. Although I live in downtown Chapel Hill, I anticipate using the light rail when it is built to shop in Meadowmont. In addition, I would consider purchasing an apartment or home in Meadowmont if it had a light rail stop within walking distance (1/4 mile).

While opponents to the C1 route cite environmental concerns, the truth is that neither alternative has been fully evaluated for environmental impact. Furthermore, turning the light rail stop near Meadowmont into a "park and ride" lot, as C2 supporters suggest, will only increase traffic and hurt the prospects for the light rail system to deliver an adequate return on investment. Furthermore, an underutilization of the light rail stops will only encourage sprawl and environmental damage in other communities.

My partner and I are in Chapel Hill because we both have (temporary) positions at UNC-Chapel Hill. When we go on the job market next year, we will seek out communities that support urban, dense living, which is possible in small towns and large cities alike. For example, I'd rather live in Madison, Wisconsin, which has a dense urban core, than Santa Barbara, California, which does not. A system that connects Duke and UNC, and has stops located in high-density, walkable communities like Meadowmont, will be highly desirable for the young professionals Chapel Hill and Durham are seeking to attract and keep.

By investing in light rail, and placing the stations in walkable, urban spaces like Meadowmont, you will ensure the economic and environmental success of the light rail between Chapel Hill and Durham. But, if you turn the stations between Chapel Hill and Durham into park and ride lots, you will not serve the tens of thousands of people who would be regular riders of a system that delivered them from their place of work to a station a quarter-mile (or less) from their doorstep.

Please continue to explore the C1 route, so we make the most out of this investment in transportation infrastructure.

Martin Johnson  
Northside, Chapel Hill

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From: Nancy Benjamin  
Date: January 9, 2012 7:48:32 PM EST  
To: <comments@dchcmpo.org>  
Subject: C2 preference for transit route  
I write to express my strong preference for the C 2 route for the proposed light rail line. It only makes sense to avoid possible damage to wildlife.  
Nancy Benjamin

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From: Rebecca Board  
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 4:10 PM

To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Fwd: Comments from Downing Creek Regarding the C2 Local Preferred Alternative for TAC Meeting on 11January 2012  
Attachments: TAC Local Preferred Alternative January 2012.doc

To: Ellen Reckhow <ereckhow@gmail.com>, Ed Harrison <ed.harrison@mindspring.com>, mike.woodard@durhamnc.gov, andy.henry@durhamnc.gov, mark.ahrendsen@durhamnc.gov, pmcdonough@ridetta.org, mkleinschmidt@townofchapelhill.org, diane.catotti@durhamnc.gov

10 January 2012  
Durham - Chapel Hill - Carrboro  
Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Transportation Advisory Committee:

The residents of Downing Creek are very concerned about the effects the Light Rail Local Preferred Alternative C2 might have on our neighborhood. We are puzzled that Meadowmont wouldn't desire a station when their neighborhood was planned to be a transit oriented community from its inception --but we don't want a fight over which location is best. We do, however, insist that our concerns about the alternative C2 route are addressed in the earliest planning stage should the C2 alternative become preferred. We are concerned about the Barbee Chapel Road intersection, entrance and egress from the Downing Creek neighborhood, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and access to the station from both sides of Highway 54.

We do not believe that the intersection of Barbee Chapel Road and Highway 54 can tolerate a ground level rail crossing. This intersection already has too many lanes, is too congested with cars, and is much too dangerous for pedestrians to cross at all -- and time will only make it worse.

The thought of adding a new intersection of the rail line on top of the existing problems is rather horrifying to those of us who live nearby and experience this intersection daily. If the rail line must cross Barbee Chapel Road at this intersection, then please make an elevated crossing to address these safety concerns or find an alternate location for crossing Barbee Chapel Road.

We are also very concerned about the negative impact on entrance and egress from our own neighborhood, Downing Creek, should the rail line cross our main entrance at ground level. Congestion along Highway 54 already makes it challenging to exit Downing Creek during certain parts of the day - the very times at which the rail traffic will also be the most intense. It is extremely important to us that our exit onto Hwy 54 not be blocked at any time. We know the rail line will cross into the center of Hwy 54 a bit east of our entrance, and suggest that a potential solution would be to move that rail crossing somewhere to the west of our entrance instead.

The maps for the C2 route show it passing through the area along Stancell Drive. This area is already used by pedestrians and bicyclists, including children, as a safe way to access the Meadowmont trail system, and

planning maps already show that pedestrian and bicycle improvements in this area are recommended. Capitol Associates has even promised us such improvements during phase II of the Hillmont project. Therefore, some form of significant barrier is in order to preserve this as a bike and pedestrian friendly area. Please include plans for exactly how pedestrians will be kept safe if the train passes through here. I'm sure other cities would have examples of ways to do this, but it occurs to us that the problem could be simply avoided by running the entire line east of Barbee Chapel between the east and west bound lanes of Hwy 54.

Finally, a pedestrian bridge over Highway 54 is greatly needed. As more land is developed on both sides of the road, it becomes even more desirable for pedestrians to cross. A bridge would also make your rail station accessible from both sides of the road, helping to eliminate the question of which side of the road should get rail service. We do realize that a pedestrian bridge may be beyond the funding scope of this project, but even so we would still like to see the best location for such a bridge clearly identified as part of the C2 plan and described as a transportation asset that could be funded separately. There are those who will try to tell you that C2 is an obvious choice, but it's not that simple. Between the uncertainty of ridership projections for a Hillmont station, and the extra expense of elevating the Barbee Chapel Road crossing, the usage and cost factors between the C1 and C2 options are probably closer than presented. Please do not cut corners on a southern route rather than thinking about all the implication of the C2 route and ensuring that it is not just a cheaper option, but a good alternative to C1 that works positively for all of us.

Thank you very much for taking the time to address our concerns,

The Downing Creek Community Association Board of Directors

Rebecca Board, President  
Brian Burke  
Micheal Douglas  
Page Skelton  
Susan Sonberg

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From: Robbie Davis  
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 9:46 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org  
Subject: Light rail proposal

Living in Falconbridge and reading all about the 2 proposals...I was wondering if the C1 proposal will accomodate a larger population of people, why would the second proposal make any sense?? Isn't the whole idea of this is to provide better transportation and more available transportation to the public to alleviate the traffic problems which are growing every year???

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From: "Tim Kuhn"

Date: January 9, 2012 7:40:20 PM EST  
To: <comments@dchcmpo.org>  
Subject: Prefer C2  
To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support of C2 over C1 because it appears that C2 will have less environmental impact on the Significant Natural Heritage Areas. I am very supportive of light rail and public transportation, but not at the expense of the limited wetlands and hardwood forests remaining in Chapel Hill.

In addition, it appears that C2 will be less disruptive to existing neighborhoods, and C2 appears to be less expensive.

I have reviewed the website, or at least tried to..., to find why the Planners are supporting C1. Given the items identified above, it is not clear why the Planners would even consider C1.

Thank you for considering my comments.

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From: "Powers, William J"  
Date: January 9, 2012 5:25:17 PM EST  
To: "comments@dchcmpo.org" <comments@dchcmpo.org>  
Subject: C2 Light Rail Route is the better choice

As a Chapel Hill resident and an employee of the University of Chapel Hill School of Medicine, I urge you to choose the C2 light rail route over the C1 route. The C1 route would cost more to build and would destroy the precious wetland areas that it would traverse. It would create parking problems for the Meadowmont Lane-NC 54 area and not provide any improved access for ridership. It has these significant disadvantages and no advantages over the C2 route. The C2 route is the better choice.

William J. Powers, MD

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From: Christopher hughes]  
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 5:55 PM  
To: comments@dchcmpo.org

Hello,

I am opposed to the amount of environmental damage the C1 plan would impose on the Little Creek bottomlands, and I will be outraged if C1 is adopted.

I want to express my support for the proposed C2 plan for the light rail line along Highway 54. My only concern with the C2 plan is that it might somehow make car traffic worse along Highway 54 in Chapel Hill, though I think both plans will probably contribute equally to further increasing Highway 54's traffic congestion. Despite the increase in traffic and more

people probably using the Friday Center park and ride lot, I am in favor of this light rail line, and I did vote for the tax increase to help support it.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Chris Hughes



Dear Ms. Pearsall,

August 9, 2011

The New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee is a body set up in 1992 by the City and County of Durham, Orange County and the Town of Chapel Hill to advise them on implementation of the New Hope Corridor Plan. (1) The Committee is presently reviewing a Triangle Transit draft Alternatives Analysis (AA) study that will identify a "Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)" for a Light Rail Transit (LRT) "mainline" between Chapel Hill and Durham. (2)

The route currently identified as "preferred" is shown crossing the bottomlands of the New Hope Creek Corridor at a new "mid-block" location, south of 15-501 and north of Old Chapel Hill Road, and running east-west between the vicinity of Garrett Road and Southwest Durham Drive (previously known as Watkins Road). (3) The area of this proposed crossing is identified in the NCNHP's Durham County Inventory of Important Natural Areas, Plants and Wildlife as "the 15/501 Bottomlands," a significant natural area occupying "a highly strategic location within the New Hope Wildlife Corridor... between the New Hope Gamelands and the Korstian and Durham Divisions of Duke Forest." The Executive Summary of the Inventory goes on to state that, the "New Hope Creek Bottomland Forest [which includes the 15/501 Bottomlands as an internal section] contains some of the best Piedmont/Mountain Swamp Forest and Piedmont/Mountain Bottomland Forest remaining in North Carolina. ... The 800-acre site also provides important wildlife habitat." (4)

The Inventory also states (pdf p. 77) that the "15/501 Bottomlands" area is an "extensive tract of bottomland hardwood forest providing habitat needed by forest-interior species," and that it is a "critical link in the New Hope and Mud Creek Wildlife Corridors." It says (pdf p. 21), "the sites that comprise the New Hope Corridor...combine to create a macro-site that is ranked as Regionally Significant, based not only on its overall size and habitat values, but also on its connections to other key refuge areas in Orange and Chatham counties." ) It further states (pdf p. 46) "that the sites identified in [the Inventory, of which the 15/501 Bottomlands is one,] still possess functioning ecosystems is probably as much a reflection of the strength of the connection between them as their intrinsic features such as size, forest maturity, of lack of internal fragmentation. In a connected system of natural areas, population losses at any one site can to some degree be compensated by animals moving in from sites where reproduction has been more successful."

The Inventory expresses its concern about threats to connectivity in the area in question. In describing the "Mount Moriah Bottomlands and Slopes," the next New Hope Corridor natural area site up stream (and across US 15-501) from the 15/501 Bottomlands, it states the area's "proximity to the rapidly developing US 15-501 commercial strip also makes it the link in this [corridor] system most likely to break, at least with regard to the more disturbance-sensitive species of wildlife." (pdf p. 58) It speaks of the openness to wildlife of this section of the New Hope Wildlife Corridor being kept, in part, by "the existence of large tracts of unfragmented bottomlands on either side of the highway." (pdf p. 59)

There is an additional concern expressed in the Inventory regarding the floodplain nature of most of the Corridor lands in the area in question. "Buffers areas are ...needed to protect key tracts along even some of the largest expanses of forested habitat found in the region. Despite their size and fairly high level of protection, most of the protected sites along New Hope Creek ... are essentially bottomlands. During the winter floods, most of their acreage can be under water,... [One] of the main consequences of development of the adjoining uplands is that all the habitat available to certain terrestrial species will again become "edge," at least during the late winter - typically during the time when stresses on animal populations are at their greatest." (pdf p. 45)

The New Hope Advisory Committee is concerned that building the mainline of a transit system directly

through this wetland ecosystem would have significant negative impacts on the natural functions that have been identified by the Inventory.

The draft TTA document also proposes up slope and to the west of the 15/501 Bottomlands, an 18 acre "Patterson Place Maintenance Facility" with a rail line spur, along the western edge of the New Hope Creek floodplain, to connect the Facility with the LRT mainline, LPA, route mentioned above. In addition to the problem of its covering land up slope from the 15/501 Bottomlands with a significant amount of impervious surface we feel a facility that would wash rail cars and store and use lubricants and other chemicals, a "spill" type land use, could pose special long term negative impacts to the Corridor. (5) There is also proposed, also up slope and to the west of the 15/501 Bottomlands, a "Patterson Place" LRT station, just to the west of SW Durham Drive. . This is the easternmost, and nearest to the 15/501 Bottomlands, of the several locations considered. (6) It is our opinion that any LRT station area will be the focus of intense development, "crucial to the viability of the LRT project" (as the project proponents put it) and will have potential long term negative impacts on the Corridor. This would be especially so for a LRT station area located just west of SW Durham Drive.

The Committee is profoundly concerned about the impacts to natural systems and to recreational and educational uses that would be created by any crossings of the New Hope Creek Corridor, except where crossings currently exist. (7) Any rail line structures built for a transit system, even elevated, will permanently fragment the Corridor and introduce noise and vibration into it. (8)

The Committee believes there is an alternative route with much less environmental impact. It would go directly adjacent to the south side of new US 15-501 bridge. One clear advantage of this route for an LRT alignment across the New Hope Creek floodplain is that it would avoid not only the new break in the forest canopy but also the two additional edge areas that the proposed "mid-block" alignment would impact, since it would use the existing edge area along the south side of the existing US 15-501 right-of-way. (9) We also believe there are better areas, away from the slopes above the Corridor lands, than those proposed for an LRT maintenance facility and a transit station.

The Committee is writing to request the NC Natural Heritage Program to review and comment on the transit corridor proposed by Triangle Transit as it relates to the resources identified in the NHP natural resources inventory studies. It would be most helpful if the Program could answer the question of impacts to the New Hope Creek Corridor of the proposed "mid-block" transit route and an alternative route directly adjacent to the south side of new US 15-501 bridge. Also, comments on impacts to the New Hope Creek Corridor of the sites proposed for an LRT maintenance facility (and connecting rail spur) and a transit station would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

Robert G. Healy

Chair, New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

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Resolution by the New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee in Response to Proposed "Locally Preferred Alternative" for a TTA Transit Corridor Between South Square and SW Durham Drive, as passed by unanimous vote August 11, 2011

For the last 19 years New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee has worked to advise its four constituent local governments on the implementation of the New Hope Creek Plan, which each adopted in 1992. Those four "founding" local governments are: the Counties of Durham and Orange, the City of Durham and the Town of Chapel Hill. The Committee has, consistent with the Plan, endeavored to keep development out of the floodway and floodway fringe, provide for buffers to protect water quality,

maintain or improve wildlife habitats, keep open the corridors that allow wildlife of all types free movement down the streams and stream banks, provide high quality recreational trails for visitors, and encourage educational use of the New Hope ecosystem, which was identified as one of Durham's most important natural resources in the Durham County Inventory of Important Natural Areas, Plants and Wildlife. Financial support of our efforts by governments at all levels, dedication of public land to park use, park and trail development and purchase and donation of land and access rights by developers have to date been well over \$5 million.

We have assumed from the start of our work that some sort of transportation corridor might in the future connect Durham and Chapel Hill. In furtherance of that objective, we have tried through negotiation with developers and testimony at public hearings to encourage increased density along Old Chapel Hill Road and 15-501 [e.g. the apartment complex on Garrett Rd. just north of the Oak Creek Village Shopping Center] and discourage it within the corridor of New Hope Creek and its principal tributaries and along Erwin Road and Garrett Road.

We note that the Corridor on the south side of 15-501 [the "15-501 Bottomlands"] extending to Old Chapel Hill Road is a forested, wetland area, with New Hope Creek essentially flowing down the center of it. The stream very frequently leaves its defined channel after rain events and the area, part of it in wildlife significant floodplain pools, stays wet for long periods of time. This constant overflow has created a large block of wetland forest, more particularly a hardwood bottomland forest, which is our special type of wetland in the North Carolina Piedmont. The 15-501 Bottomlands is not an isolated natural area, but a central and strategic link in a much larger block of wetlands called the "New Hope Creek Bottomland Forest," which extends from the shores of Jordan Lake to a point just beyond Erwin Road in the Duke Forest. According to the NC Natural Heritage Program, this larger block of wildlands is one of the two best remaining of its type in North Carolina. Sandy Creek, a tributary of the New Hope, and covered in the New Hope Creek Plan, enters the New Hope from the east in the 15-501 Bottomlands area and also frequently spreads over its banks and creates a distinctive vegetative zone.

The Committee is profoundly concerned about the damage to natural systems and to recreational uses that would be created by any crossings of New Hope Creek or Sandy Creek other than on existing roads and bridges or on elevated structures that are immediately adjacent and parallel to them. We note that the proposed "locally preferred alternative" as mapped (see footnote) would run a rail corridor directly across the heart of the wetland area. The New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee believes that this routing would produce major and negative impacts on the environment and on recreational use in the New Hope corridor. Specifically—

--the construction of an elevated track on pylons or other structures within the 100 year floodplain south of 15-501 would severely damage the function of wetlands and even the stream course, both by the erection of new structures and by the heavy equipment and temporary roads that would have to be built during construction;

-- The New Hope Advisory Committee, with the support of all the local elected bodies, worked at length to ensure that the newly completed 15-501 replacement bridge over New Hope Creek was re-designed to have a higher and wider opening underneath to allow for people and wildlife to safely pass under the fast and voluminous highway traffic in this area. Any structure built for transit use through the 15-501 Bottomlands at "mid-block" and away from 15-501 or structures along Sandy Creek would present a new barrier to wildlife movement. Removing vegetation, particularly large trees from this high-

canopied, mature forest, during and after construction, would make an incursion into the area and fragment contiguous forest interior habitats, which are increasingly rare in urban environments. The area now, in spite of the power line cut essentially parallel to the Creek, offers a macrosite favorable to “large guilds” of interdependent species. Fragmentation would have very significant impacts on these guilds, and would favor common “edge” species over those requiring unbroken forest and den trees;

-- Nearly 15 years ago, the Committee worked with volunteers and with the City and County of Durham to build a nature trail in the bottomlands. It was built with \$30,000 in funding from the National Recreational Trails program, matching funds from Durham, and private donations. The trail now receives significant recreational use, and the NHCACC has plans to increase its educational value through signage and other materials based on a “bottomland hardwoods” theme and consistent with the nature of the land. We have since then collaborated with Durham County and volunteer and community groups to keep it maintained. A transit routing across the corridor near or over this trail would produce noise, vibration, visual distraction and interference with the educational value of our proposed interpretation of the bottomland forest;

--the route as mapped would also require permanent structures and damage during construction in the floodplain of Sandy Creek east and west of Garrett Road;

--according to the Triangle Transit draft Alternatives Analysis, an 18 acre train maintenance facility is proposed for a portion of Patterson Place very close to both the wetland area and to 15-501. This is a quasi-industrial use, with a rail line spur, to and from the LRT mainline, along the slope at the west edge of the 15-501 Bottomlands. Activities at this complex will include washing of transit vehicles and storage and use of a variety of chemicals. It also would surely involve a high degree of impervious surface. Ironically, this property, which is close to a proposed station, would seem to be better suited to high density residential or similar use that would be passenger generating;

---the location of the proposed Patterson Place Station could encourage new development (and its run off) on sensitive lands, in particular from the proposed location just west of SW Durham Drive onto the 15-501 Bottomlands (and the slopes above them) and downstream onto the New Hope Creek Corridor lands south of Old Chapel Hill Road.

--In general, station location in the vicinity of the New Hope Creek Corridor, including areas near lower Sandy Creek, must foster more intensive use of already developed land and avoid the creation of pressure to develop sensitive lands.

--from a procedural standpoint, members of the NHCCAC participated in public meetings sponsored by TTA and raised these concerns. We also invited TTA representatives to attend our April meeting and discussed our concerns with them. Despite this input, the corridor listed as the “preferred alternative” has not changed, and we believe it will cause much greater negative environmental impact as compared with another routing (see below). We intend to participate in subsequent environmental impact analyses of corridor alternatives. We respectfully request that the corridor routing described below, adjacent to 15-501 be included among the locally preferred alternatives to be analyzed.

--we believe an alternative routing exists that would allow multiple transit technologies, including bus, bus rapid transit, and rail, without producing the negative impacts described above. (see attached PDF) Most of the problems associated with “mid-block” crossing of New Hope Creek could be avoided by locating the transit route immediately adjacent to the south side of 15-501, with the main New Hope Creek transit crossing at the new highway bridge. We understand that the FONSI (environmental impact

analysis) for the bridge provided for future construction of a transit corridor directly adjacent to the bridge, on the south side. This is a recently cleared area, the result of construction of the new bridge, that could provide much of the right-of-way. Equally important, access to the site for construction could be obtained by using this cleared area, or (for very large equipment) 15-501 itself. A transit crossing, with an underpass opening as high and wide as the bridge itself, would have a de minimis impact on animal migration routes down the corridor. In addition, instead of adding two new, long, edge areas on either side of a new swath across the 15-501 Bottomlands, as the currently proposed "locally preferred alternative" would produce, the already cleared area along the south side of the 15-501 right-of-way could be used. In addition to reducing disturbance to vegetation, any transit noise and vibration would be confined to an area of existing noise and vibration. There should also be ways to avoid intrusion into the Sandy Creek wetlands and the encouragement of increased density in that environmentally sensitive area. The attached PDF offers an alternative for doing so;

--Another crossing with fewer environmental impacts would be parallel to Old Chapel Hill Road. It is, we note, the route proposed for the BRT-Low Alternative. (If this technology and route are favored, the Committee would want to be further consulted as the project progressed, especially with regard to the area near the bridge over New Hope Creek.)

In conclusion, the Committee has long been supportive of non-automobile transportation alternatives within the New Hope Corridor. But we are very much opposed to placing transit where it destroys valuable community resources. What we need are transit alignments that will complement, rather than compromise, the wildlife, open space, and recreational values of the New Hope Creek Corridor.

Note:

See "Durham-Orange Corridor" (at: <http://www.ourtransitfuture.com/index.php/get-involved/reports/durham-orange-alternatives-analysis-documents-july-2011/>) and in particular "Durham-Orange Vol 1 Detailed Definition of Alternatives (11.2 MB | PDF)," pdf p 41, and "Durham-Orange Vol 2 Plans and Profiles - Segments C & D Friday Center to Cornwallis 22.19 MB | PDF)," pdf pp. 17-19 (download version) or pdf pp. 58-60 (DVD version) aka Sheet D-6 through D-8.

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Wednesday, January 11, 2012 7:20 PM

To:comments@dchcmpo.org

Subject:Light Rail Plans

Members Of The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization,

I am contacting you with regard to the Light Rail plans you are choosing from.

I support the C2 Plan. It is the clear local preference. And I strongly urge you to support and choose the C2 Plan.

Light Rail should not come at the expense of our state's significant Natural Heritage Areas and Federal Wildlife Lands. That is why the C2 Plan is the best choice.

Again, the C2 Plan is the best choice. It is the plan that I support and is the clear local preference. And I strongly urge you to support and choose the C2 Plan. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bryon Sundberg  
Durham, NC

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 8:29 PM

To: Comments@dchcmo.org

Cc: board@downingcreek.org; downingcreek@yahoogroups.com

Subject:Comments on Highway 54 light rail corridor

We write in opposition to the proposed C2 alternate route for the western end of the light rail corridor which would parallel and cross over NC Highway 54. We think there is too much traffic along Highway 54 at present and the changes which have been proposed to alleviate future congestion do not address this fact, merely preventing future increases. Can you imagine the problems of a train crossing this route during a UNC football or basketball game? The planned development of the Hillmont project will only serve to increase congestion in our immediate area (Downing Creek) along Stancell Road. This route is currently used by many residents for walking, jogging and is a route to Meadowmont and Chapel Hill in general. The proposed station will inhibit our access and the rail line may be dangerous to our residents. We urge you to choose the original C1 route into the Meadowmont corridor.  
Steve & Judy Brackett

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 7:11 PM

To: comments@dchcmo.org

Subject:C1 vs C2

I strongly oppose the efforts to upset years of planning to move the Chapel Hill to Durham light rail out of Meadowmont. Meadowmont was created for mass transit. All the issues is the publicity campaign by C@ advocates were there throughout this planning project. The communities south of Hwy 54 will be severely impacted by the selection of C2. And nowhere it here any suggestion the overburdening the 54 corridor will produce the new TOD which is the whole purpose of the light rail route. We need DCHCMPO to make the right decision for our community and not bend to the lobbying of a small group of advocates. Please note also that the wildlife found in the area for the C2 route are, according to the proponents, not unique but "wildlife typical of this region". The alleged savings in building C2 will be lost when , as is needed , C2 is built on an elevated track to solve the incredible safety issues that C2 presents. I look forward to your decision in this matter.  
Dick Ford

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 3:39 PM

To: Henry, Andrew

Subject:C2 Light Rail Alignment

Andrew:

I am sending my comments to you because the 'comments@dchcmo.org' address kept dumping me out!

I read the Forum by John Wilson in the Herald Sun yesterday and realized that when I gave you my input (see below) I did not indicate which option I preferred. I do agree with Wilson that C2 is the better alignment.

Dawn L Paffenroth

Subject: Alston Ave/NCCU Commuter Rail Station

To: andrew.henry@durhamnc.gov

Date: Wednesday, December 21, 2011, 1:47 PM

Andrew:

I am sending my comments to you because the 'comments@dchcmo.org' address kept dumping me out!

I definitely support the need for an Alston Ave/NCCU commuter rail station. East Durham does have a huge percentage of transit dependent, low income and minority populations relative to the overall project corridor. And, as also stated in your Report Addendum, this station would connect residents of East Durham and Northeast Central Durham to the region's employment, institutions, shopping and entertainment. Expanded access to Durham Technical Community College and NCCU is definitely needed.

I also support including this commuter rail station in the Durham-Wake Commuter Rail Project so that user benefits are not delayed six or more years until the Durham-Orange LRT Project (where it is currently included) is implemented. The sooner we can bring this needed service to East Durham and Northeast Central Durham the better for the economic development of those areas!!

Dawn L Paffenroth

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 8:43 AM

To: comments@dchcmo.com

Subject:Light-rail line proposals

I am writing to express my strong support for Line 2. Am particularly concerned about the environmental implications of going with Line 1. Also, for the "quality of life" implications resulting from implementation of Line 1.

JoAnn McJunkin

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 8:52 AM

To: comments@dchcmo.org

Subject:alternate light rail plan

We are residents in Downing Creek and have concerns about the plan to put the light rail system on the south side of Hwy 54. Stancell Rd is used frequently by residents in Downing Creek to access the walking paths to MEadowmont and beyond and putting a rail system in between Stancell and Hwy54 could be a huge safety concern. Please address how you would improve the safety, walkability, and aesthetics of Stancell if the alternate light rail were to go along the south side of 54. Also the intersection of Barbee Chapel

and 54 is a mess as it is. The traffic backs up along Barbee Chapel in the mornings, and evenings, during game times and busy weekends, and pedestrian crossing is not only impossible, it is very very dangerous. Improvement to this intersection in addition to the rail system station would need to be a major focus of the planning.

Thank you,  
Kylie Harris

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 1:17 PM

To: comments@dchcmo.org

Subject:TTA Alternatives Analysis/Light Rail

To whom it may concern,

I am a Research Professor at UNC Chapel Hill and own a home in Southern Durham. I strongly support a light rail line to alleviate the congestion on NC54. After considering the alternatives, I support the C1/Meadowmont Station route with Alignment A3 with a station at the UNC Ambulatory Care Center. The connection at UNC would give easy access to the rail line for thousands of employees and students at UNC. Having a stop at Meadowmont would give these riders access to the restaurants, stores, and fitness center there, as well as give rail access to the thousands of residents in this large development. I suspect the slightly higher cost in construction would be recovered in the higher rail on this route. The environmental impact should be offset so that the overall effect is neutral. I understand that the C1 route would inconvenience some of the residents of Meadowmont, but the greater good for the rest of the residents of Chapel Hill/Durham/Raleigh should be considered.

Sincerely,

Laura Lindsey-Boltz, PhD

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 7:30 AM

To: comments@dchcmo.org

Subject:Transit - Vote for C2 route

I would like to voice my vote as a citizen on Orange County for the C2 route for the light-rail transit. I live just outside of Chapel Hill-Carrboro and would like to use the rail in the triangle area. I object to the C1 route because of disturbance to Significant Natural Heritage Areas and federal wildlife lands. Please choose the C2 route, which will be less costly as well as leaving our natural areas undisturbed.

Thanks,

Mildred Harris

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 9:54 AM

To: comments@dchcmo.org

Subject:Light Rail Parking Lot in my backyard

Attachments: Light Rail Transit park and ride.jpg

To Whom It May Concern.

My name is Ricky Roberson my address is 115 Pearl Lane, Chapel Hill.

I have lived here all my life of 61 years. Pearl Lane dead ends to my property with the



northwest corner connecting the property of Photo Specialties business and Hillmont property. Their property borders Stancil Drive.

The owner of Photo Specialties contact me last night 1/10 that a meeting was taking place 1/11 9:00am, to discuss the alternate routes of the light rail transportation system. He also mention that he had information that the TTA has plans to take his business for a Park And Ride Lot if the route comes by South of HWY 54 which would ultimately be located boarding my backyard. See Attachment that he sent to me.

If this is true, why on earth would the people scheduling meetings on such an important matter NOT INFORM THE PEOPLE DIRECTLY AFFECTED with some type of NOTICE. I have had no time to come prepared for this meeting.

The property i live on has been in my family for 110 years dating back to my great grandparents, my sister Donna Sayers lives beside me. A Park and Ride Lot behind us would make the quality of life unbearable. We have been negotiating with Capital Associates "Hillmont" for six years so their project would make our properties livable. I vigorously oppose this plan and will be whatever I have to do to fight it. Please Respond.

Ricky Roberson

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 12:37 PM

To: comments@dchcmo.org; Council Members

Subject:preference for C2 rail alternative - also should go to airport!

Hi there,

I am writing to voice my strong preference for the C2 light rail alternative. I do not want to see the rail line cut through designated Significant Natural Heritage Areas and fragment valuable mature hardwood forest and wetlands. Please route the rail line along NC 54 and the existing infrastructure corridor.

Also, I think it would be a serious mistake not to route the Triangle's light rail system to go directly to the RDU airport. Please don't let the taxi drivers and airport parking lot officials dictate the essential utility of this important public investment. People should be able to land at RDU and take a fast train to downtown Chapel Hill, Durham, Cary, and Raleigh, plus the three major universities. That would make us look sharp!

Even more than a light rail line, and much, much cheaper, we need several safe bicycle transit routes between Durham, Chapel Hill, and RTP. Adding wide bike lanes to NC 54 and Erwin Rd would be a big help.

Thank you very much,

Ron Sutherland, Ph.D.

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 10:49 AM

To: comments@dchcmo.org

Subject:Railway Route

Mr. Henry,

We have attended many of the meetings re: the proposed railway as well as the feeder streets and whatever other name has been attached to this initiative. As 14 year residents of the neighborhood most

affected by the C2 proposal as well as being carved up by the feeder street and Leigh Village proposals, we are writing to express concern about the article in the 8 January 2012 Chapel Hill News.. As one of these families, we writing in support of C1 due to its limited impact on our area and the ability of it to follow the plan approved when Meadowmont was planned and approved by both Durham and Orange counties. If any route other than C1 is selected, please explain what the purpose behind all of these hearings for developments to be approved if at a whim of the then built community it is changed?

For several years we have had to live and continue to live with the 54 traffic nightmare - while our taxes have tripled+ in the same time frame - the light at the intersection with our neighborhood was supported by our neighborhood and those in Falconbridge with the idea that the light would change when we approached the light - it does not, that it would stay green long enough to clear the intersection of traffic at peak times - it does not. There are times at 7:40 a.m. one may sit there nearly 10 minutes watching traffic go by waiting for the light to change so we can enter 54. Perhaps a red light traffic camera could be installed to fund the Durham budget - there are many on 54 who run this light at each change of the light - no matter the time of day. Additionally, a daycare was sited within our neighborhood that has provided an increase of over 60 cars daily with unsafe parking and entry off of 54 onto the access road leading to the daycare center as a result.

The neighborhoods made up of very high income families are the neighborhoods most opposed to C1 - this is a fact - check the income and monthly fees needed by those living in The Cedars - this is not a retirement community for people of average means - so as a neighborhood of families of average means we will not have the financial means to fight this - so my suggestion to those supporting the C2 version that will run along and through our neighborhood - buy our homes for their commercial value - already estimated by commercial real estate professionals at \$375,000 to \$550,000 per each 1/2 acre lot truth be told I am sure the Meadowmont, Oaks and Maida Vale neighborhood groups could buy our Eastwood Park neighborhood homes several times over at those prices - in recent years some have been purchased and now are offered as rentals by members/residents of those very neighborhoods. Or perhaps UNC or Duke would like to purchase our neighborhood at the commercial rate and turn it into additional office buildings for their health units/providers - UNC has purchased several of the buildings that used to house offices, veterinary services and dry cleaners in the past 3 years. Now these building have been razed and it is apparent a very large and tall building is about to be built on one of those parcels.

As a family we looked at buying/building in Meadowmont when it was first started - it was very clear then via signage what was in the works for the Meadowmont Lane area - so this should not be any surprise to those families living within Meadowmont. All signs made it very clear what would be running in front of Rashkis Elementary and the homes on the main streets of Meadowmont - as I said before this is not new.

In Eastwood Park, this neighborhood was not on the plan to be divided up - only in the past 5+ years have plans been shared with the neighborhood re: Leigh Village. We have suffered through paving - not completed - come drive down past the Dermatology clinic onto Celeste Circle - how many times and for how long are we to be expected to drive our vehicles over this partially paved area - we were given

written notice by Rhea Paving it was to be completed in late October/early November - well, it is January 9th and it is not done yet, additional stop signs affecting our travel in and out of our neighborhood as well as increased traffic due to UNC taking over several buildings along 54.

I asked at one of the meetings what the "learning curve" was or if additional signs could be installed re: the right turn into our area off 54 - I was told the public should know within 3 weeks of the turn lane opening what to do there without additional signs - well, at the time of my questions it had been 1 year - and now it is nearly 3 years - so we either have a very slow learning public driving on 54 or we need signs. You can see the damage caused to the grass and bushes where the cars are attempting to merge onto 54 from a right turn only lane.

Perhaps it is time for your department to meet with our small neighborhood group and only our group - not a large meeting where only the large groups have a voice.

Eagerly awaiting your response.

Tom and Karen Sanders

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Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 11:54 AM  
To: comments@dchcmo.org  
Cc: lizbkenb@gmail.com  
Subject: Proposed light rail routes Durham - Chapel Hill CHOOSE C 2

Our home adjoins the Little Creek Bottomlands and Slopes SNHA. We feel strongly that these areas of disappearing watershed and woodland deserve continuing protection and preservation. Local governments have an obligation to assume a stewardship role in protection and preservation. The proposed C 1 route traverses the wetlands and Natural Heritage Areas and will cause significant adverse environmental impact. Meadowmont Village is already congested and the C 1 route will worsen the congestion there as well as at the NC 54 - Barbee Chapel Rd. intersection. We prefer the C 2 option which traverses existing roads (54 and George King) well outside the wetlands and SNHA. The C 2 route is estimated to cost \$30,000,000 less than C 1 - a significant saving to the taxpayer. Please route the rail via C 2.

Timothy and Anne Marie Smelzer

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Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 11:00 AM  
To: comments@dchcmo.org  
Subject: Light Rail  
I support the "C2" option for the light rail system ( along NC 54 and George King Road ). It's the only logical option from a cost, disruption, and environmental impact basis.

Tom Grady

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 5:02 PM  
To: comments@dchcmo.org  
Subject: Light Rail Local Alternative C2

To Whom it May Concern,

As a resident of Downing Creek, I, as well as my wife, children and neighbors, are very concerned about the effects the Light Rail Alternative C2 would have on the neighborhood. More specifically, I am concerned about the negative impact on the safety of and entrance to Downing Creek with a rail line crossing the Downing Creek main entrance at ground level. Congestion along Highway 54 already makes it challenging, and dangerous, to enter and exit Downing Creek during certain parts of the day. A rail line crossing will only make this more difficult and dangerous.

Moreover, I do not believe that the intersection of Barbee Chapel Road and Highway 54 can tolerate a ground level rail crossing. This intersection already has too many lanes, is too congested with traffic, and is a very dangerous pedestrian crossing. The addition of a rail line on top of the existing problems will only exacerbate the current issues, making this intersection extremely dangerous.

It should also be noted that the area along Stancell Drive (which the maps for the C2 route show it passing along and through) is often used by pedestrians and bicyclists, including children, as a safe way to access the Meadowmont trail system and retail shops. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements in this area are needed, and have been recommended and promised in planning maps and by Capitol Associates (the developer of the Hillmont project). The C2 route would only make this area more dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists. It would seem that if the light rail were to along the Hwy 54 corridor, the better solution would be to run it between the east and west bound lanes of Hwy 54 or along the currently undeveloped northern side of Hwy 54.

I must also say that I am confused as to why the C1 alternative is not the strongly preferred option given that Meadowmont was planned to be a transit oriented community from its inception and contains a business and retail area with better population density for the rail line and associated stations.

As mentioned above, my concerns are shared by my wife, children and neighbors. Thank you.

Tim Johnson  
General Counsel  
Ply Gem Industries, Inc

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Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 12:58 PM  
To: Henry, Andrew; Comments@dchcmpo.org  
Cc: William Wilson  
Subject: Caution regarding Environmental Impact Statements  
Attachments: USSupremeCourt07-588.pdf

Nr. Henry, Please forward.

Dear Committee,

In my public comments today I mentioned a concern about the way environmental impact statements might be carried out. I've written about this situation in my recent book, *Constructed Climate* (Univ. Chicago).

Below is an excerpt summarizing the situation, and I attach the full Supreme Court decision against "Riverkeepers", which is heavily excerpted in my quote.

EISs might not give a full accounting of the value of our environmental resources.

Thank you for your efforts.

Will Wilson

Assoc. Prof. Biology

Duke University

"A case before the U.S. Supreme Court involved power plant cooling systems that use huge volumes of water for cooling their systems, simultaneously heating the water. This water could come from "closed-loop" reservoirs designed solely for cooling, or large rivers, lakes, or oceans. In the latter case, anything living in the natural waters either gets mashed by the tremendous pressures against screens over the intake pipes, or cooked in the cooling system when the water heats up.

Chapter 26 of the U.S. statutes (number 33) on navigable waters, section 1326(a) titled "Effluent limitations that will assure protection and propagation of balanced, indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife," reads, "With respect to any point source..., whenever the owner or operator of any such source ... can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Administrator (or, if appropriate, the State) that any effluent limitation proposed for the control of the thermal component of any discharge from such source will require effluent limitations more stringent than necessary to assure the protection and propagation of a balanced, indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife in and on the body of water into which the discharge is to be made, the Administrator (or, if appropriate, the State) may impose an effluent limitation under such sections for such plant, with respect to the thermal component of such discharge (taking into account the interaction of such thermal component with other pollutants), that will assure the protection and propagation of a balanced, indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife in and on that body of water." In different legislation, Section 316(b) of the Clean Water Act reads: "Any standard established pursuant to section 301 or section 306 of this Act and applicable to a point source shall require that the location, design, construction, and capacity of cooling water intake structures reflect the best technology available for minimizing adverse environmental impact."

On April 1, 2009, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6–3 that power plants can cook up aquatic wildlife because the costs of protecting them exceed the benefits. The majority opinion states "that the EPA permissibly relied on cost-benefit analysis in setting the national performance standards."

Dissenting, Justice Stevens, with Justices Souter and Ginsburg joining, write: “the EPA estimated that water intake structures kill 3.4 billion fish and shellfish each year,” but “instead of monetizing all aquatic life, the Agency counted only those species that are commercially or recreationally harvested, a tiny slice (1.8 percent to be precise) of all impacted fish and shellfish. This narrow focus in turn skewed the Agency’s calculation of benefits. When the EPA attempted to value all aquatic life, the benefits measured \$735 million. But when the EPA decided to give zero value to the 98.2 percent of fish not commercially or recreationally harvested, the benefits calculation dropped dramatically—to \$83 million.” Justice Stevens continues, “The Agency acknowledged that its failure to monetize the other 98.2 percent of affected species ‘could result in serious misallocation of resources’ because its ‘comparison of complete costs and incomplete benefits does not provide an accurate picture of net benefits to society.’”

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Dear DCHC MPO TAC Members,

I am submitting the attachments listed below for the public hearing tomorrow (1/11/12) on the rail transit Alternatives Analysis, agenda item 7, "Triangle Regional Transit Program – Locally Preferred Alternative." As some of these have been sent earlier to several of the individual DCHC MPO member governing bodies, please excuse any duplication. We are sending them now so that all TAC members will have them as they consider the issues before taking action on an LPA in February. Please help us save the New Hope Creek Wildlife and Open Space Corridor, a truly outstanding feature of our local, natural environment.

- a. Resolution by the New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee in Response to Proposed “Locally Preferred Alternative” for a TTA Transit Corridor Between South Square and SW Durham Drive (NHCCAC Res7-11-11.rtf)
- b. " 'alternative routing' attached PDF," from page 3 of item a. above (LRT route copy.small.pdf)
- c. detailed map of a portion of item b. above showing the intersection of Garrett Road and US 15-501 (Garrett at 15-501 large scale.pdf)
- d. the "list of concerns" ("Map Drawing Principles.v2.1.rtf") written as a temporary measure, when NHCCAC had a Resolution but had not finished the map to go with it.
- e. New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee request for comment letter to the NC Natural Heritage Program (Letter for Natural Heritage Program Draftv2-3.rtf) (This letter is included in the materials in "Att 07 - Comments on Alternatives Analysis.pdf" (sic) sent by MPO staff for the 1/11/12 hearing, however in that pdf, at pages 23-25, it is missing the important footnotes.)

f. (Not an attachment but included for reference) NC Natural Heritage Program's response letter to item e. above (See pages 6 and 7 of "Att 07 - Comments on Alternatives Analysis.pdf" at [http://www.dchcmo.org/index.php?option=com\\_wrapper&Itemid=41](http://www.dchcmo.org/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=41).)

Thank you,

John Kent

Technical Advisor

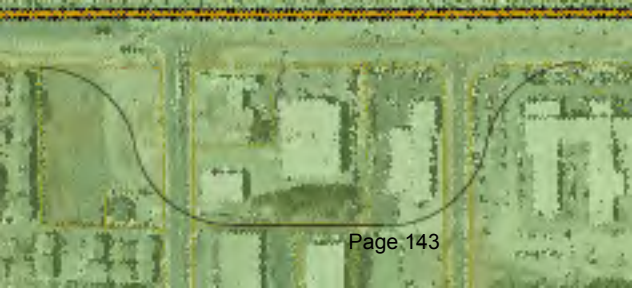
New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Maps and attachments are on the next several pages...









## Map Drawing Principles, v2.1

### Alignment:

1. Across New Hope Creek, for either proposed, fixed guideway, technology alternative (LRT or BRT-High), the alignment should be within the 15-501, south side R/W (as close as 13 feet away from the south side of the new, east bound, south bridge of the new, New Hope Creek bridge pair\*) and the alignment should use the transit route reservation along the north side of the apartments and (to the apartments' east) the two county parcels on the west side of the New Hope Creek and abutting the south side of the 15-501 R/W (as shown in the Durham Co Registry of Deeds, on the plat at Book 132, Page 142).
2. Across Sandy Creek, for either proposed, fixed guideway, technology alternative (LRT or BRT-High), the alignment should be within the south side R/W of the eastbound off ramp from 15-501 to MLK Jr. Parkway, north of Larchmont Road. To connect to the proposed MLK Jr. station\*\* from the off ramp, south side R/W, possibilities include passing over, or under, the MLK Parkway in the area north of the University Drive.

General note: There is proposed a 250 foot turning radius, for LRT and BRT-High, at each turn from University Drive in the South Square area: onto Westgate Drive (Alt. D-1) and onto Shannon Road (Alt. D-3). This fact might be used to design the route of the alignment between the Patterson Place and MLK Jr Stations, in particular: first, as the fixed guideway leaves the Patterson Place Station area (west of Witherspoon) to arrive along side 15-501 and, second, as the fixed guideway approaches MLK Jr Station from the west (as above).

### Station:

3. The proposed Patterson Place station, located east of Sayward Drive and west and south of SW Durham Drive, is too close to the NHC Corridor. It should be, at the eastern most, on the west side of Witherspoon Blvd., for example, as shown in the adopted SW Durham - SE Chapel Hill Collector Street Plan (see <http://www.dchcmpo.org/dmdocuments/ApprovedCSPNetworkPoster.pdf>).

### LRT Operation and Maintenance Facility:

4. The proposed Patterson Place LRT operation & maintenance facility, with its ingress/egress rail line spur from the LRT mainline,\*\*\* is not an appropriate neighbor to the Corridor.

### Notes:

\* As spelled out in the NEPA FONSI document for the bridge replacement, construction project

\*\* Northeast corner of MLK Parkway and University Drive, a location which while in the NHC watershed, is not considered problematic

\*\*\*The facility would be located north and east of SW Durham Drive and south of US 15-501 and up slope from the NHC Corridor's "Mt. Moriah Bottomlands & Slopes" and "15-501 Bottomlands." The ingress/egress spur would be located east of SW Durham Drive and south of US 15-501 and along the face of the slope just to the west of the "15-501 Bottomlands."